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BAY AREA REPORTER

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Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities since 1971

Fiscal woes engulf LGBT center

by Joe Dignan

A month after a glittery gala celebrating its one-year anniversary, San Francisco's LGBT Community Center has pushed six of its employees — about a third of its workers — out the door in a cost-cutting move; is desperately trying to delay an \$800,000 balloon payment against its line of credit due on May 1; and is facing ongoing lawsuits from the contractors who built the center and say they still haven't been paid, the *Bay Area Reporter* has learned.

Financial crisis? Depends who you ask. Executive Director Brian Cheu said, "Well, it's a little tight right now."

But Cheu is leaving the center after not quite a year on the job. He said he is expected to be out of the executive director's office by May 1.

"It's not a crisis," said the center's board co-chair Randi Gerson, who, with lawyer Scott Wiener, has stepped in to run the 40,000 square foot facility at Market and Octavia until a new executive director can be found. "I think it's very important the message that gets out there is that we're in control. Sure, we need help. We could use community support. We can use financial support. But the board and the staff together have been working very hard to be fiscally responsible."

Some outside observers, however, have said that the center's basic business plan may be flawed.

The center's facilities consist, basically, of 17 meeting rooms which rent out by the day or by the hour to a broad range of community groups, but which are mainly occupied by classes given by City College and the Har-



The lobby of the LGBT Community Center; the center is facing financial troubles.

vey Milk Institute.

"That's what we do, we provide meeting spaces for people," said Cheu.

But experts in nonprofit management say that that mission is very different than other community centers around the U.S.

"They're operating on a different model than other community centers I know about," said Tim Wolfred, a staffer with Compass Point, a nonprofit management consulting firm. Wolfred has been a turnaround executive director for several in-trouble nonprofits.

"Others are service providers," Wolfred said. "L.A. has a huge health clinic. That's a major source of revenue. This community

center is primarily a landlord, and they don't have any income coming in from programs they may be running."

Others say that expecting the space to support itself from rentals might have made financial sense three years ago, before the economic downturn, but now, with reduced rents all over the city, it won't work.

"Even though they started very big, they're still a start-up organization, and they're still trying to find the business plan that's going to work for them," Wolfred said. "They came into existence in the middle of an economic downturn. Every nonprofit in the city is seeing less in foundation and corporate grants."

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Witness Sonja Johnson points to where body was found.

TG murder suspect was victim, friends say

by Ed Walsh

Neighbors say they were struck by the look of peace on Santianna "Cindy" Flagler's face late last Wednesday night, April 9. As the 46-year-old transgender woman gracefully walked down the hallway of her residential hotel, it appeared as if she were reborn. The look, they say, was alien to her in the two months since her allegedly abusive partner, Michael Neal, 43, was released from jail.

As Flagler walked down the hall, Neal was almost dead. His body was sprawled in the hallway behind her. One neighbor recalled blood rhythmically gushing out of Neal's body with every heartbeat. As paramedics carried Neal down the stairs to an ambulance, another neighbor heard what she thought may have been his last gasp for air.

Flagler was arrested for Neal's stabbing death a short time later at 4th and Folsom streets, a block from the CW Hotel where the couple lived. Police say she confessed and is being charged with murder.

The two women who witnessed the stabbing say Flagler is the real victim and should be freed because she acted in self-defense to fend off a relentlessly violent partner.

"Michael deserved what Cindy did to him," said Yvonne, a witness, who asked that her last name not be used. She and another neighbor, Sonja Johnson, saw what they said was a life and death struggle between Flagler and Neal that immediately preceded the fatal stabbing.

The neighbors told the *Bay Area Reporter* that Neal pushed Flagler up
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State's assessors attack DP rule changes

by Matthew S. Bajko

Facing an avalanche of opposition from the state's assessors over proposed changes in the assessment of property owned by domestic partners, out lesbian Carole Migden, chair of the state tax board, is urging the LGBT community to voice its support for the proposals.

The proposed changes are in response to the ruling issued last year by former San Francisco Assessor Doris Ward that stated same-sex couples would be afforded the same exclusions as married couples and not face reappraisal of their property when a partner died. Since the city adopted the ruling, nearly 20 people have taken advantage of it upon the death of their partners.

The tax board's rule changes, if put into effect, would also prevent domestic partners statewide from facing reappraisal of their property if one of the partners dies. The Board of Equalization is set to vote on the rule changes Wednesday, April 23.

Since they were first introduced in March, the proposed changes have sparked a vocal outcry from numerous assessors throughout the state. The California Assessors' Association, led by Marin County Assessor Joan Thayer, has come out against the proposals.

In a letter to the board, the association stresses while it has not taken a position on



BOE Chair Carole Migden

whether gay couples should be treated the same as heterosexual married couples, it is opposed to the changes due to jurisdictional concerns.

"The exemption of otherwise taxable real property is beyond the scope of the Board's rule making authority and, in fact, beyond the jurisdiction conferred upon the state Legislature without a constitutional amendment,"

the association states in a letter dated March 24 it sent the board.

While the state association objects to the rule changes based on fears it will create a burden on assessors and their staff, as well as provide for potential abuse, it is clear from the letters of other assessors that other concerns with the proposals exist.

"I must say I am exceedingly troubled that the Board would attempt to exonerate the actions of Ms. Ward and the City/County of San Francisco by altering or reinterpreting existing property tax rules," writes Sutter County Assessor Michael V. Strong in a letter to the tax board dated March 14. "I am also alarmed that the legislature and the Board of Equalization both appear determined to le-

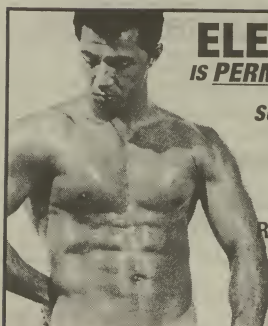
gitimize 'domestic partner' relationships, to the extent that they would receive equivalent treatment with marital relationships under California property tax law. Aside from the lack of moral principle evidenced in such a quest, further significant objections may be asserted."

Strong goes on to state his opposition (which he underlines and puts in all upper-case) is rooted in the California Family Code which defines marriage as solely between a

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Meals, worship, and gay camp mark Easter

by Zak Szymanski

If the thought of Easter conjures up images of forced attire, Christian guilt, and other childhood traditions, think again. The Bay Area is host to some of the most fun, LGBT-inclusive Easter events to reclaim religion, springtime, or family in ways that work for everyone.

Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco will kick off its Easter observance tonight (Thursday, April 17) at 150 Eureka Street in the Castro with a 24-hour prayer vigil for healing and peace beginning at 8 p.m. On Good Friday, at 7 p.m., MCC will have a service of song and story, and on Holy Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., an interactive workshop will invite participants to "imagine your body without fear." Easter Sunday's service is entitled, "The Queer Body is Alive! Experience Resurrection," and is held at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., and 7 p.m. Visit www.mccsf.org for more information.

At Glide Memorial Church, Easter Sunday includes a 6 a.m. sunrise worship in addition to the usual 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. Breakfast will be served from 7-8:30 a.m., and a chicken dinner will be served from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; the meals are free and all are welcome. Glide is located at 330 Ellis Street; visit www.glide.org or call (415) 674-6000 for more information.

A service with a global activist stance will take place tomorrow, on Good Friday, from noon until

2:30 p.m. beginning at the Polk side of City Hall. Entitled "Tenderloin Stations of the Cross," the service will remember the victims of war and the poor. The traditionally mobile service will visit "stations" around the neighborhood, with participants carrying a 20-foot cross and several homeless people speaking about their experience on the streets. Presented by the Temenos Catholic Worker - a ministry of presence and harm reduction in solidarity with the American Catholic Church of

petual Indulgence hosts its annual Easter celebration in Dolores Park on Sunday, April 20, from noon to 4 p.m.

A queer and sex-positive, yet all-ages event, the Sisters' Easter party will feature hours of games for "perverted people and their children" according to Sister Bella de Ball, including an egg hunt, egg toss, cupcake walk, and face painting.

At 1 p.m., the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Freedom Band will lead a procession of Sisters to

The Sisters' Easter party will feature hours of games for "perverted people and their children."

New England, the Order of Christian Workers, and the Islamic Society of San Francisco - the service will "pledge ourselves in the struggle for peace and basic human rights."

Tenderloin Tessie's Holiday Dinners presents its Easter Sunday dinner on April 20 from 1-4 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin Street, at Geary. A traditional Easter supper will be served, and volunteers are needed for kitchen and set-up on April 19, and for serving and clean-up on the day of the dinner. The event is free and open to everyone; call (415) 431-7221 for more information.

Finally, with the aim to "promulgate universal joy and expiate stigmatic guilt," the Sisters of Per-

the stage, where the traditionally twisted "Hunky Jesus Contest," as well as the "Doin' It Doggie Style: The Doggie Costume Contest," and "The Easter Bonnet Contest" will wow the audience.

Founded 24 years ago on Easter in 1979, the Sisters will be celebrating its birthday this Sunday, and marking the significant date with a theme, "Indulgence 4:20, Let There Be Splendor in the Grass." The theme is in support of medical marijuana rights, said Sister de Ball, and the event's ceremonies will include the sainting of medical marijuana activist Ed Rosenthal, recently convicted for marijuana cultivation by a federal jury that now denounces that decision.

Other people to be sainted include activists and volunteers Kevin Snow, Jimmy Donohue, Professor John DeCecco, Ph.D., Mark Lindley, and Erik Gibb.

The Sisters' Easter grants this year will total \$15,000 and will be divided among 26 organizations.

Additional entertainment includes performances by FutureTrybe; Agency-X; Mark Sargent and Michael Grove as Ethel Merman and Luciano Pavarazzi; Manley Lennox; Polkacide; and Acid Housewife.

Going out of town this weekend? Don't fret. The Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence will host "Another Very Good Friday" tomorrow night in celebration of its second anniversary. The evening will include a grant giveaway and the introduction of Sister Mary Annette, the mascot of the new Condom Outreach Ministry. The Russian River event takes place at ClubFAB in Guerneville from 9 p.m. to midnight.

More information about the Sisters' Easter events can be found at www.theisters.org.

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4/18 Good Friday - 12 Noon + Traditional Service with Veneration of the Cross
Watch be fore the Cross until 3PM:
Liturgy of the Tomb 3PM

4/19 Easter Vigil - 10 PM + joint service with First United Lutheran

4/20 Easter Sunday - 6PM + Festive Eucharist of Easter Day



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Three arrested in murder of bi man

by Ed Walsh

Three people were arrested in Monterey County this week in connection with the murder of a bisexual man.

Dominique Daniel England, 23, his girlfriend, Jeanne Soja, 29, and Daymon Douglas Schrock, 20, are behind bars in the Monterey County Jail on a combined bail of more than \$2.5 million.

Police said that as a result of a tip received on Tuesday, April 8, they served a search warrant at a property in North Monterey County where a human corpse was discovered. Over the course of the next few days, Salinas Police searched for and eventually located all three suspects.

Through dental records, the victim was identified this week as 30-year-old Robert Alan Maricle, who disappeared four months ago.

The two men and a woman were arrested on charges of murder, conspiracy, kidnap, torture, and hate crime.

Prosecutors said this week that they are only filing murder charges. They told reporters that there isn't enough evidence yet to prove the other charges, including the hate crime charge. Police aren't commenting on why they believe the killing is a hate crime.

Court papers documented that Salinas Police believe that Schrock



Robert Alan Maricle

belongs to the Nazi Low Riders, a white supremacist gang. Police said they believed England likely associates with the group.

Maricle's mother, Shirley, told the *Californian* newspaper in Salinas that her son had attention deficit disorder and had the mind of a teenager. She said he was last seen on December 14 at a friend's apartment.

That friend may have been Soja, or one of Soja's neighbors. Maricle spent time with both on the night he disappeared. Schrock and England both gave statements to police placing Maricle at Soja's apartment on the night he disappeared. Schrock and England told

police they gave Maricle a ride from Soja's apartment and dropped him off at another location in Salinas. But in the independent statements to police, the suspects named two different locations where they said they left Maricle. Both men said that was the last time they saw him.

Schrock was arrested in Soja's apartment on December 20, six days after Maricle disappeared, and charged with possessing methamphetamine.

Parents of the two male suspects, Schrock and England, showed up to visit the men at the Monterey County jail last Saturday. They denied that the men could have committed an antigay hate crime. The parents told the *San Jose Mercury News* that Schrock and England had close relationships with gays and lesbians.

"I looked him straight in the eye, and I know my son," Doug Schrock told the *Mercury News*. "He didn't do this."

The Monterey County AIDS Project held a press conference on Monday, April 14, in the wake of the news of the crimes that has shaken the Monterey Bay Area's LGBT community.

"As executive director I felt it imperative that gays and lesbians in Monterey and their families and friends know all resources available to them in their shock, grief and fear over this death," Wayne Johnson said. ▼



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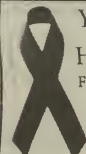
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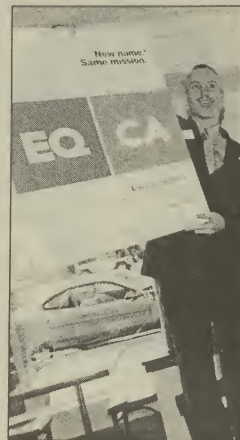
by Zak Szymanski

Political campaigns rely on raising big money, which is what the No on Knight effort did in an attempt to defeat Proposition 22, authored by state Senator Pete Knight (R-Palmdale) and passed by voters in March 2000. Proposition 22, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman, held steady in its approval ratings despite all the cash spent on both sides of the issue.

When all was said and done, No on Knight still had more than \$300,000 leftover, which No on Knight chair Mike Marshall promised would be put toward LGBT equality efforts in California.

At the time that No on Knight was disbanding and taking stock of its assets, it was presumed and predicted that most of its money would go to the newly-formed California Alliance for Pride and Equality, the largest LGBT lobbying group in the state.

But initial concerns about CAPE's solvency and accountability caused a delay in distributing those funds, according to Marshall, with smaller lump sums granted as it became clear that the money was being used effectively. Additionally, No on Knight had to keep some money in its bank account as it wrapped up financial matters related to campaign fines



Executive Director Geoff Kors shows off CAPE's new name and logo.

and the group hired to accept donations, Marshall said.

With the campaign tying up its loose ends, and the lobbying group's rocky beginnings now over, CAPE—which will be known as Equality California as of May 1—is standing on stronger ground.

CAPE/EQCA has an executive director with a vision in Geoff Kors; has recruited new board members and hired new staff, and is launching an outreach and education program as well as a polit-

ical action committee to endorse LGBT-friendly candidates.

And for all this progress, according to Marshall, the No on Knight fund has just awarded another \$50,000 to the organization, bringing the total of such contributions to \$210,000.

"We are extremely grateful to the No on Knight campaign committee for the generous contribution," Kors told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "And we're thrilled that they have seen fit to give CAPE those resources to continue its efforts to ensure that same-sex couples will be treated equally in California."

Kors added that those concerned about pending LGBT legislation need only visit www.cal-cape.org, and with a few clicks of the mouse, can send correspondence to their legislators.

Of the remaining No on Knight money, said Marshall, about \$30,000 went to San Diego's community center to sustain local organizing efforts around public policy issues. Another \$15,000 went to organizers in Nebraska to help them set up an infrastructure poised to fight for same-sex marriage.

And in addition to the recent \$50,000 check to CAPE/EQCA, another \$25,000 just went to California's Freedom to Marry Coalition, which is a consortium of groups around the state, including Lambda Legal Defense and Education

next page ►

Breast Cancer Action hosts town meeting

by Zak Szymanski

A lot has changed with regard to breast cancer knowledge, awareness, and treatment. But unfortunately, according to many activists, the medical, pharmaceutical, and chemical industries do not necessarily reflect these changes. Companies continue to profit from the disease by investing both in cancer-causing toxins and the drugs to treat them, some activists say, and the number of people diagnosed with breast cancer has continued to grow steadily over the last several decades.

It's time, according to the Bay Area-based Breast Cancer Action, to start getting angry, and productive. BCA's sixth annual Town Hall Meeting will be held next Saturday, April 26, at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center from 12:30-5 p.m.

KTVU Channel 2 Emmy-award winning anchor Faith Fancher, who was diagnosed with

breast cancer in 1997, will be a keynote speaker at the meeting, as will social activist and legislative advocate Holly J. Mitchell. The mistress of ceremonies will be Barbara Rodgers of KPIX Channel 5's *Eyewitness News*, and music will be provided by Adrienne Torf.

Workshops throughout the day will include a "Breast Cancer 101" question and answer session, and discussions about chemicals and cancer; corporate profit from the disease; mammography and the myth of "early detection;" and environmental health.

The meeting aims to empower women and others affected by the disease to bring an end to its devastation.

"Organizing people to do something besides worry is an important part of our mission," said BCA Executive Director Barbara Brenner. "It's not about becoming a full-time activist; if everyone committed to doing one thing over the next few months we can create a revolution that can bring

an end to this epidemic."

BCA's town meeting—which regularly draws several hundred people—is free of charge, although donations are encouraged, particularly by those who can afford to help keep the town meeting accessible to everyone.

"We don't want anyone to have a reason to stay away," said Brenner. "If you care about this issue then you should be at this meeting."

The Oakland Asian Cultural Center is located at 388 9th Street on the second floor and is accessible by BART (exit at the 12th Street station). Limited parking is available at the center and free parking is available at the Oakland City Center garage.

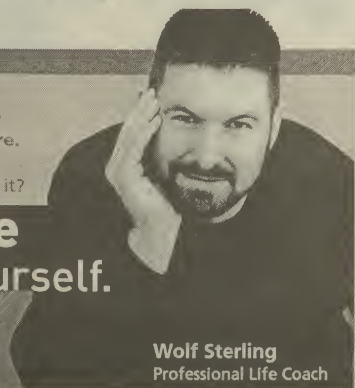
For more information, including how to arrange childcare, ASL interpretation, and other special needs, call (415) 355-9988. Breast Cancer Action information is available by calling (415) 243-9301 or visiting www.bcaaction.org.

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Harass case delayed

by Cynthia Laird

Legal proceedings in the harassment case against two radical AIDS activists were delayed Tuesday, April 15. During a brief court appearance, attorneys for defendants Michael Petrelis and David Pasquarelli merely set another court date for April 29 and indicated to Superior Court Judge Herbert Donaldson that discussions were ongoing in an effort to resolve the matter.

The case stems from Petrelis and Pasquarelli's alleged involvement in harassing and threatening members of the San Francisco Department of Public Health and employees at the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 2001.

The pair also allegedly called staff members of the *Bay Area Reporter* although those calls are not part of the criminal case.

A plea-bargain agreement was withdrawn by prosecutor Michon Martin last week, so the case is now waiting for a second preliminary hearing. Petrelis and Pasquarelli have pleaded not guilty to the charges, which include telephone harassment and stalking.

Both defendants had been ex-

cused from Tuesday's court appearance due to health reasons.

Following the brief court appearance, Stuart Blumstein, Petrelis's attorney, told the B.A.R. that his client very much wants to settle the case.

"She withdrew the offer," Blumstein said, referring to Martin. "We were asking for clarifications of multiple issues."

Reached after court, Martin said, "Mr. Blumstein knows exactly why" the agreement was withdrawn.

"I was not comfortable and didn't believe his client was on board," Martin said.

She declined to discuss whether settlement talks were ongoing, saying only, "The case is proceeding."

In an e-mail letter to the B.A.R., Blumstein stated that there were "important free-speech and assembly issues and the exercise of free passage within the city," that he sought to clarify last week when the plea agreement was withdrawn.

"As you can imagine, any stay-away order involving at least 24 individuals, many of whom work for the government, and 12 office buildings, including government buildings, that there would be a

tremendous need for clarification," Blumstein wrote.

He said after court that during last week's appearance, he was seeking clarification on whether his client could use BART or Muni if the station is near one of the listed buildings, for example. Blumstein also said that Petrelis had written a letter of apology, which was apparently part of the nixed plea-bargain.

Blumstein took exception to a report in last week's paper that Petrelis "spent much of Tuesday's appearance in the back of the courtroom laughing."

"My client takes the legal troubles he is facing very seriously and in no way sees the charges as anything to laugh about," Blumstein said. He explained that Petrelis was laughing in response to a comment made by Blumstein's investigator in reference to looking at a magazine.

Finally, Blumstein said that Petrelis does not face "two counts of solicitation of personal injury claims with intent to sue out of state." However, that charge is listed on the district attorney's Web site of current cases. A call to the D.A.'s office seeking clarification was not returned at press time. ▼

Old money funds

◀ previous page

cation Fund; Parents, Friends, and Families of Lesbians and Gays; the National Center for Lesbian Rights; and other groups whose missions include the right to

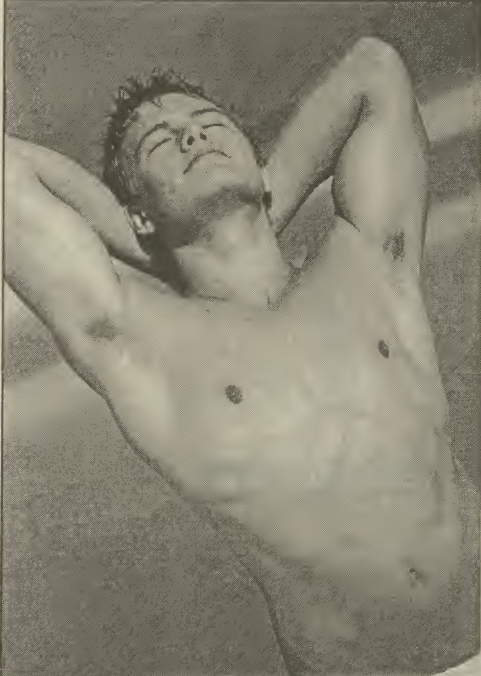
marry. The coalition has been instrumental in pushing forward Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg's (D-Los Angeles) AB205, the expanded domestic partnership bill.

A little over \$40,000 of No on Knight's money remains in the bank, said Marshall. Additionally,

he said, No on Knight donors were tapped last week for a fundraiser at 2223 Market that pulled in an additional \$50,000 for CAPE/EQCA.

"We're just really impressed," Marshall told the B.A.R., "both with the marriage coalition, and the changes that CAPE has made." ▼

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ANIMAL HEALTH NETWORK, INC. is proud to announce the addition of Dr. Calvin G. Lum to the AHN family. Dr. Lum is a graduate of the University of California Davis School of Veterinary Medicine. He also has a B.A. in Zoology and a B.S. in Biology both from the University of California Berkeley. Dr. Lum is a native of San Francisco and has been in practice for sixteen years in the Bay Area.

With a heavy heart we also bid farewell to Dr. Chris Hummel after eight years with our AHN family. Dr. Hummel, his partner Dan and their Irish Setter "Monty" will be returning to their roots in Texas. We want to thank Dr. Hummel for his years of excellent service to our hospital and community, he will be truly missed.

We welcome all of Dr. Hummel's clients to stop in and say goodbye and welcome Dr. Lum to our family and community.

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OPEN FORUM

Crisis at the center

The news this week that the LGBT Community Center is facing significant financial problems and is embroiled in time-consuming legal wrangling with the building's contractor hit us like a ton of bricks. Just last month, we asked about the center's financial condition and were not told of impending staff layoffs and other budgetary matters. The center has declined our request for current financial records until after its board meets Wednesday night – after we go to press. But from what we've learned so far, all is not well at the center. The center's financial debt is mounting, and that has led to the layoffs and the early May 1 departure of Executive Director Brian Cheu, who had initially agreed to stay on until his successor is found.

The center has not been forthcoming about these problems and that must change. Hundreds of community residents have invested their money and time in the project. Millions of dollars were raised to construct the building, including hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal, state, and local money, not to mention corporate donations. The center opened amidst much hoopla just over a year ago; 13 months later, one-third of the staff has been laid off, operating hours have been cut, and income seems to be stagnant. These are not good signs.

In simple terms, the situation at the center is about money – or in this case, the lack of it. A balloon payment of \$800,000 on a \$2.3 million line of credit is due May 1. While board members tell us they have a verbal extension on the deadline, nothing's in writing at this moment. A lawsuit has been filed by the center's contractor. This civil suit is apparently related to the center's refusal to pay the \$850,000 retention fee normally due upon completion of a project. The lawsuit points to a protracted effort on the part of the center to withhold paying the fee. The center alleges that there are problems with the building. While that may be the case, the legal strategy employed by the center's board has resulted in the building becoming a major distraction, resulting in lost time that could have gone toward fundraising, membership recruitment and retention, finding an operator for the cafe, and seeking foundation and grant money.

The center's business model appears to

be flawed. There still isn't a cafe in the building, which was supposed to be an important source of revenue. That one nonprofit tenant has moved its office out of the building because of space limitations is an example of what some have long believed to be a problem: many of the offices are just not big enough. The lack of center revenue also points to meeting room rental fees not achieving projections. Yes, a lot of people use the center and there are many free and low-cost events, but those don't pay the bills and this should have become apparent to the board, which should have adjusted its financial plan. Now they've been forced to radically shift gears with staff layoffs, including the program director and chief financial officer. With no one coming in to replace Cheu immediately, day to day operations are apparently going to fall on the board co-chairs.

This is a complicated situation. All of this did not happen overnight. And we've long known and reported of the center's need for cash. We did not know things were this criti-

cal. And now that the word is out, the board of directors must exert leadership and must provide an explanation to the community. There must be full accountability; the center should hold a public meeting to outline the problems and get input from the community. Significantly, the dispute with the contractor needs to be resolved so that the board

can devote its time to fundraising and getting the center back on its feet. Many, many people have invested money in the center as a way to invest in the LGBT community. Given the center's dire need for more money, the board will have to work to regain public confidence. A bailout is unlikely as both the city and the state face huge budget deficits of their own. As a result, the center

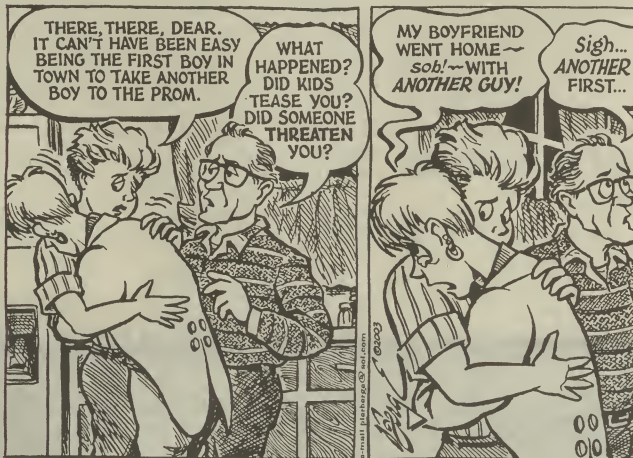
will have to depend on private contributions.

In our view, this is absolutely a crisis. What direction it takes remains to be seen.

The community center touts itself as the only one among the more than 100 community centers nationwide that was built from the ground up. Maybe it wasn't built on a solid foundation. ▼



Editorial



Why I'm a conscientious objector

by Stephen Funk

I am a conscientious objector: that is why I am leaving the Marine Corps reserves. I am not leaving the Marines because I am gay. I am not leaving the Marines because I am young. I am not leaving the Marines because I am Filipino or because I am Native American or because I am Irish. This fact appears to have been missed by the attack that the Bay Area Reporter launched on my character, my decision, and on those who have assisted me in this decision.

I am leaving the Marine Corps because as I stated in my application, I am a conscientious objector: "War kills troops from both sides, innocent civilians and harms anybody in the least bit involved. War ravages the environment of the battleground, it uses up resources better spent elsewhere. It steals from human life by taking money from education, the arts community development, and other public programs. It steals from the poor and gives to the rich."

War is wrong and war is immoral. It is the opposite of all the things I hold to be important. I am not completely naive. I knew that the military is violent and used for war when I joined. But military training opened my eyes to exactly what the military does, to what the scale of war is. Screaming "Kill, Kill, Kill" as I bayoneted sand bags made it all too clear what my task could be, regardless of what I had been told by the military recruiters. I was not a conscientious objector before I went into the military, but – even as a reservist – I came to fully understand that I would be part of a well-oiled killing machine.

Much of what I learned was dedicated to quashing people's natural aversion to

killing; it is a core belief of everyone, yet the indoctrination I received was designed to suppress that belief. I was unwilling to go along with that. It is not moral for me to let go of my opposition to killing just because I signed a contract.

I am not leaving the Marines out of cowardice as the B.A.R. implied with its reference to brave gay men and lesbians serving in the military. It was unlikely that I would be posted to Iraq. I was ordered to be sent to Camp Pendleton, California. I was going to be "landing support" where a major part of my job would have been to get Marines on planes to Iraq and motivate them to go kill. As someone opposed to violence and war there is no way I was going to do that. I refused. (In addition, I have been in the process of applying for conscientious objector status since November. I did not suddenly decide to become a C.O. when my unit was called up.)

I suppose I should not have been surprised by the hostility with which my decision was greeted by the Bay Area Reporter's editorial page. But I was surprised. As a young gay man I was under the mistaken idea that the gay community media would be interested and even sympathetic. Instead I am attacked for opposing war, for not making being gay the primary reason for my leaving the military, and for not sufficiently highlighting my sexuality in my decision. (Even though I state that I am gay in the conscientious objector application.)

I chose to publicize my decision this way, even though my attorney and many others tried to persuade me not to go public at first. I chose to highlight being a conscien-

tious objector.

Being gay is not always the center of the world.

I am a conscientious objector and I just happen to be gay. I decided to go public after an ACLU conference where I talked to youth about my decision and what I was going through. I felt I could use my situation to let people know about that option. In the military you feel you don't have any options, you feel very helpless and that you have no right to your opinions and no right to object.

I did want to, and did, come out to the gay media. Coming out to other media was not as important. When the mainstream media found out I am gay, that became the entire story, so I am glad the most important message got out first. The issue was to inform people about conscientious ob-

jection, so that people in the military and those thinking about enlisting could find out about the option before they join up or go on with their mission.

I did not want the homophobia of many Americans to get in the way of their learning about conscientious objection. Even after my coming out in both the queer and straight media I am now hearing from reporters all over the country about young people who are calling newspapers and asking about how to apply for conscientious objector status. ▼

There is a Stephen Funk Defense Fund. The address is P.O. Box 111, 1230 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94102.



Guest Opinion

LETTERS

Time to reexamine bathhouse issue

Kudos to Matthew Bajko for the excellent article on the new bathhouse study [*"Study calls into question SF's gay bathhouse prohibition," April 10*]. Although the study's results can be interpreted in a variety of ways, it certainly appears clear that private spaces in sex-on-premises venues do not lead to increases in HIV transmission rates. That alone is reason enough to reexamine the issue, since any public policy which so severely impacts something as fundamental as privacy rights is only justifiable if it can be proven to significantly benefit public health and welfare. But as Hank Wilson, Richard Carrazza, and others point out in the article, the policy not only has no proven benefit, but it also has led to many unintended negative consequences. The physical and mental health of our community could actually be markedly improved by the presence of a bathhouse operating similarly to those in other cities such as Berkeley or Ft. Lauderdale. And I know that the owners of the major U.S. bathhouse chains would love to operate in San Francisco, and would be happy to work closely with city health officials to be sure their venues promoted good sexual health. The only thing stopping them is our city's unique, outdated, harmful, and intransigent stand on private spaces.

Jonathan Klein
San Francisco

Funk should join a gym

Your April 3 article on gay AWOL marine, Stephen Funk, opened my eyes to the conflicting stances on the war against Saddam Hussein that those in the United States armed forces are taking [*"Gay AWOL Marine seeks conscientious objector status"*]. I strongly support Mr. Funk's application for a conscientious objector status; he should not be obligated to kill if doing so violates his moral and religious sensibilities. However, I cannot say that I sympathize with Mr. Funk.

Mr. Funk's equation of the Marines with the Boy Scouts, as well as his statement that he enlisted not for combat but for growth and camaraderie, underscore his ignorance of the role the United States armed forces have played in world history. American GIs in 1942 were not deployed to the South Pacific for a tropical field trip of rock climbing and beach bon fires. They certainly did more in 1992 than set up tents in the oil-rigged deserts of the Persian Gulf. Anyone who knows anything about the world understands that one enlists with the implicit knowledge that he or she might be called upon one day to aim a loaded gun at another human being. Why else are the armed forces called the armed forces?

I do hope you are honored your request for a military discharge, Mr. Funk. Citizens of all nations truly have much to fear once soldiers as preposterously simple-minded as you are summoned to protect them. The next time you dedicate your life to a cause, be intelligent enough to acquire some sense of what you're getting yourself into. And since you are so concerned with personal growth and male bonding, with making love and not war, take this suggestion: buy a membership to Gold's Gym.

Rafaelito V. Sy
San Francisco

CO status legitimate issue

Funny that the B.A.R. forgot to mention in its editorial last week ("Stephen Funk's Folly") that service people do have the right to ask for conscientious objector status. Many people are conscientious objectors to war. I was one when I was Funk's age. The unjust war at the time was in Vietnam. My friend, Simeon White, later a well-known queer activist here in San Francisco, went to jail rather than be sent overseas to kill Vietnamese.

Just because we have a volunteer military doesn't mean young people can't be conscientious objectors. One can easily be lured into the military by the slick misleading recruitment campaigns that tell you everything except the simple fact that in war you have to kill people, including children. Service people should have a right to say, at any time in their military service, "I can't do it, I can't kill." Killing is the most heinous act humans commit.

That's why antiwar activists support Funk, because the bottom line is that he has the right to refuse to commit this heinous act. It doesn't matter why he signed up, it doesn't matter that he should've known better, it doesn't matter whether he originally joined to kill or to acquire job skills (as many working-class young people do), he still has the basic right to say at any time, "I can't and I won't kill."

That's the issue in this case – not "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" or the LGBT folks who choose to go to war or the fact that Funk is gay.

Tommi Avicollini Mecca
San Francisco

Howard Dean's backbone

I for one am glad that Howard Dean is the only major Democrat running for president with the backbone to take a position against this illegitimate gov-

ernment's war in Iraq. I believe, however, that the war is distracting our nation as the Republicans in government give away the store to their rich buddies.

I appreciate that Governor Dean takes the "liberal" position that we should balance our budget. Asking for the government to balance its books and everyone to pay their fair share does seem like a radical idea in Washington right now.

The Democrats in the Senate allowed the first Bush tax cut to begin the bankrupting of our country in 2001 and now we hear that they scored a "victory" by cutting his obscene \$700 billion tax cut to a merely profane \$350 billion.

I agree with Howard Dean in that when the budget is this badly in deficit, if we're arguing over the size of a tax cut, we've already lost the argument.

Howard Dean will take a stand and make sure there are enough funds to pay for programs like the Ryan White CARE Act and HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS) that have always been under attack from an ideological standpoint, and now are under attack from a budgetary standpoint.

As the other Democratic presidential candidates' stated opinions on foreign policy, the economy, education, civil rights, and healthcare rarely bear even a passing resemblance to their voting habits, I have to support the one candidate whose record as a public servant is most closely aligned with his stated positions and with my own views: Howard Dean.

Carolyn Olliss
San Francisco

Waffling Democrats

I was dismayed to read Wayne Friday's commentary about Governor Dean's "use of the war against fellow Democrats" [*Our Man Friday, April 3*]. Dean is absolutely correct to challenge Kerry on his waffling on Bush's war on Iraq. To begin with, not only did Kerry, Lieberman, Edwards, and Gephardt vote to "support the American troops ... and to support President Bush and his policies" after the war had started, but in October they all voted to give Bush and Bush alone the authority to go to war against Iraq preemptively and unilaterally, with or without U.N. approval. They voted yes in spite of the pleading of thousands upon thousands of their constituents, i.e. us, not to give that power to Bush. They voted with Bush and against Kennedy, Boxer, Feingold, Byrd, and Wellstone (yes, he was still alive then and standing up for his beliefs).

When they voted yes on that resolution they voted to end their influence on the administration's war policies; they voted to allow Bush to abandon a diplomatic solution, to even abandon the U.N. Security Council. They voted to silence their own voices and silence them they did. At least they were silenced until now when Senator Kerry is speaking up in favor of regime change at home; until now, when Kerry chooses to criticize Bush's failure to give diplomacy more time. Kerry authorized Bush to use whatever tactics he chose to use. I expected Bush to fail us. I hoped and wrote, I hoped and prayed that Kerry, Daschle, Feinstein, Edwards, and Gephardt wouldn't fail us when that fateful resolution came up for a vote. But they did fail us and I have no argument with Dean for seeing that failure and calling it what it was.

I would also point out that Dean hasn't criticized Lieberman for his position on Iraq because Lieberman has been clear from the outset that he wanted Bush to have the power to choose to go to war on Iraq. Dean disagrees with Lieberman but he respects that he has a clear position which he stands by. Kerry set himself up for criticism when he helped to set us up for Bush's war and then questioned the war.

I am grateful to Dean for standing up, for giving us someone we can get excited about backing. He isn't the one who made war the first topic on everyone's mind. Bush did that with the help of the Congress. Dean would love to talk about healthcare and civil rights, about balanced budgets and real commitments to education, and when people are ready to talk about those topics I suspect they'll like what Howard Dean has to say.

Avery McGinn
San Francisco

Reality check needed

Regarding Tom McCloskey's letter concerning the war [*Mailstrom, March 27*], he needs to be educated that being antiwar is not being pro-Hussein (or for that matter, anti-troop, another cheap shot from the pro-war side). If he wants to feel shame at the disproportionately high percentage of the gay community who have come out against this war, so be it. For me, I feel nothing but pride.

It's this war that's shameful, and America has lost all moral authority in pursuing it. Bush's sudden concern for the plight of the Iraqi people comes rather late, after all the other reasons he's given for waging this war have fallen through: Iraq's complicity with al Qaeda in 9/11 (no credible link has been found); Iraq's nuclear capability (no evidence has been found)

next page ►

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Mailstrom

◀ previous page

for this either); Iraq's refusal to cooperate with the U.N. inspectors (per Hans Blix, the head inspector, Iraq was finally cooperating). Iraq has been successfully contained since the Gulf War, and there is no credible evidence suggesting that it posed a serious threat to America. What this war has accomplished so far, is: (1) worldwide condemnation, even from nations that have been America's sympathetic allies, who now see America as an international bully; (2) inflammation of anti-Americanism throughout the Islamic world (not only in the Mid-East, but in Indonesia and the Philippines as well), thus, in fact, increasing the potential for terrorism; (3) the commitment of hundreds of billions of dollars not only to this war effort, but to the subsequent planned occupation as well (while our own economy is nose-diving and our infrastructure crumbling); (4) diverting our resources from hunting down the real villains, the al Qaeda terrorists, and, of course, (5) the tragic and pointless loss of life on both sides of this senseless war.

By their response, it's obvious that the majority of the Iraqi population do not regard us as "liberators" but as "invaders," a Christian superpower trying to overwhelm a third world, Islamic nation. McCloskey and his ill-informed kind need to get a serious reality check. Whether this is a naked grab for oil or some Messianic vision of Bush's that he is Christ's avenging angel, we have no business being in this tragic war.

Clinton Seiter
San Francisco

Protesters aren't 'terrorists'

In his letter regarding the peace protesters who blocked traffic in San Francisco (*Mailstrom*, April 3), Sarosh Kumana calls for the creation of "a new criminal category so these protesters can be punished for deliberate economic sabotage and terrorism." Mr. Kumana, do you really want to equate blocking traffic with terrorism? The ill named Patriot Act gives the government the power to secretly jail terrorists and take away their citizenship. Is this really what you think should happen to the protesters?

Mr. Kumana, how would you have punished the Stonewall rioters or the protesters who literally battered down the doors of SF City Hall to protest the acquittal of Harvey Milk's murderer? Gay people have had a lot of experience with protest and also with the creation of special "criminal categories." Mr. Kumana should remember, or perhaps discover, what the pink triangle stands for.

Blocking traffic is definitely not a very successful long term protest tactic, and could cause unintentional harm to innocent people. But it is insane and irresponsible to equate being stuck on an off ramp with "a kidnapping" and "terrorism."

John Pache
Berkeley, California

Label rooms, not people

The restroom label problem that Gwen Smith talks about in her April 3 column ["What flavor is your restroom?"] results from what information designers would call an error of cognitive mapping. That is, the 'men' and 'women' signs are attached to doors, but they don't really describe the characteristics of the rooms behind the doors. Instead they purport to describe the people who are meant to enter the rooms, and clearly, binary gender labels fail for transgender people.

A better solution would be to label restrooms according to the amenities to be found inside. Each door could sport an array of nicely designed pictograms including, for example: toilet (single), toilets (multiple), urinal, sink, mirror, diaper station, tampons, condoms, etc.

This system would have the added benefit of telling you whether the restroom is a one-holer (in which case it is polite to knock first.)

Rob Costin
San Francisco

Ballroom dancing revisited

Many of you may have read the "Dance on" column [*Sports Complex*] in the April 10 issue of the *Bay Area Reporter*. Much to my dismay, I feel that the article had several errors in it.

The article incorrectly stated the following: "And while there aren't specific GLBT classes." This is incorrect. The Metronome Ballroom offers two same-sex specific classes each month and occasional monthly workshops.

"... people can pair off however they choose." This, too, misrepresents our culture at the Metronome Ballroom. We do our best to balance our classes with both leaders and followers. If a same-sex couple attended one of our non-specified, same-sex classes, they can choose to stick together or rotate in the class. Although we encourage rotation in all of our classes, it is not a requirement.

"His life partner, Richard Lamberty." Richard is not my life partner. Richard and I are colleagues. I have

known him for many years through the ballroom community.

"Each style has five variations, which dancers are required to know." This statement doesn't make any sense. The dances are not referred to as styles and there isn't a required variation that they need to know. Dancers who compete in the Gay Games must learn the international style of dancing if they wish to compete. There are two categories: Latin or Standard/Modern. The Latin dances are rumba, cha cha, samba, paso doble, and jive. The Standard/Modern dances are fox-trot, waltz, quickstep, tango, and Viennese waltz.

"If you decide to do all ten, you really have compete in all." This is unclear to what it refers to. If a dancer decides to compete he/she can choose to compete in either Latin, or Standard/Modern, or both categories.

I hope this clarifies any concerns that anyone might have had about the column and as always I appreciate your continued support. If you have any questions about the column please feel free to call me at (415) 252-9000 ext. 101.

Douglas Mitchell, Associate Director
Metronome Ballroom
San Francisco

DPH should dump cartoon ads

I'm now certain that it's not just my taste, and the "Healthy Penis" campaign really is stupid. Math is not a matter of opinion. The campaign's ad in the March 27 *B.A.R.* proclaims, "The number of syphilis cases has increased 1000 percent from 55 cases in 1999 to 494 cases in 2002." That would be 798 percent, not 1000 percent.

Would be. The actual figures from the S.F. Public Health Department's Web site www.dph.sfbay.org/Reports/HlthAssess.htm show 122 syphilis cases for 1999, and 595 cases for 2002.

That 388 percent increase is frightening enough without exaggerating or lying about it. But what can you expect from the team that's expensively plastered those artless, amateurish, adolescent cartoons all over town?

This growing health crisis requires accurate, smart, sex-affirming public education. It's time for the health department to ditch the dumb cartoons and allocate whatever scarce funding remains to a new and wiser team of health educators.

Randy Alfred
San Francisco

South Africa AIDS solidarity

The largest AIDS related demonstration in world history went relatively unnoticed by all Western press. On February 14 more than 20,000 South Africans demonstrated outside the opening of Parliament in Capetown. They demanded a government AIDS treatment program including antiretrovirals.

Since then non-violent civil disobedience has occurred throughout South Africa. On March 20 peaceful protesters in Durban were greeted with tear gas, water cannons, and beatings. Five were hospitalized. Over 100 were arrested in Capetown. South Africa's Treatment Action Campaign is calling for international solidarity.

Please call and e-mail South African officials throughout April. Solidarity actions will take place in late April. In L.A. major stars, musicians, and everyday people will drop 600 (the day's death toll) pairs of shoes at the South African Consulate on April 28.

A sample message to e-mail or call in could be: "Please implement the just demands for antiretroviral AIDS treatment by the Treatment Action Campaign, the Coalition of South African Trade Unions, and over 500 other South African groups and over 100 U.S. organization. Brazil, Thailand, Costa Rica, Cuba, Botswana, and South Africa's largest private employers (Anglo Gold, De Beers, and Gold Fields) provide treatment. It's time for the South African government to do so as well. I urge you to take advantage of the technical assistance offered by Brazil and Thailand to produce affordable generic AIDS medications in your own country."

Or better yet, use your own words.

Contacts: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. NC Dlamini-Zuma, e-mail: media@foreign.gov.za; Deputy President Zuma, DeputyPresident@po.gov.za; Deputy President Zuma, DeputyPresident@po.gov.za; Communications Director Lakela Kaunda, lakela@po.gov.za. Copy to Treatment Action Campaign: info@tac.org.za. Call South African Embassy Deputy Chief Thandabantu Nhlapo at (202) 232-4400, or Los Angeles Consul General Claudine Mshali at (323) 651-0902.

As South Africa has no consulate in the Bay Area we are e-mailing South Africa and calling Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles.

For more information contact www.healthgap.org or www.tac.za.org.

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John Iversen
HealthGAP National Board Member
Berkeley, California

POLITICS

War winds down; Demo campaigns gear up

by Wayne Friday

As the Bush war in Iraq appears to be coming to an end the campaign among Democratic candidates to replace the president next year is beginning to gear up.

Last week, all nine of the Democratic hopefuls met together in a debate of sorts in front of a Washington, D.C. audience at a forum sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund. The nine Democrats quickly clashed over the justification of the war and the role the U.S. should or should not play in Iraq's reconstruction.

This was the first time that the nine candidates had shared a stage for a debate and the differences among the eight men and the lone woman (former Illinois Senator **Carol Moseley Braun**) were far ranging.

Where do these nine Democratic presidential contenders stand on the leading issues? Well, while they were almost evenly divided about whether the U.S. should have moved against **Saddam Hussein**, none of them said they regretted their original positions, given what all seemed to acknowledge was the success of **George W. Bush** to overturn the Hussein government. The candidates, however, did disagree over the financial role the United States should now play in rebuilding Iraq. While all of the candidates quickly agreed that "no American child should be left behind" (a phrase, curiously, that Bush himself also likes to use) while speaking before the Children's Defense Fund, the topic of children and family issues quickly turned to Bush's foreign policy and to domestic issues, where many feel the president is much more politically vulnerable.

As for the war against Saddam Hussein, "We've gotten rid of him, I suppose that's a good thing," said former Vermont Governor **Howard Dean**, whose campaign has been given a boost by his position as the antiwar candidate. "But there's going to be a long period when the United States is going to be maintaining Iraq, and that's going to cost this country's taxpayers a lot of money that should be spent on schools and kids."

Dean's comments were echoed by other antiwar candidates **Moseley Braun**, Representative **Dennis Kucinich** (D-Ohio), and the Reverend **Al Sharpton** of New York.

Senator **John Edwards** (D-North Carolina) quickly took issue with Dean and the other war opponents that the war was "an either-or choice." "That is false; we can do two things at the same time, particularly if we get rid of the Bush tax cut for the top 1 or 2 percent of Americans," Edwards said.

Senator **John Kerry** (D-Massachusetts), who, like Edwards, voted in support of the war in Iraq, used the platform to repeat his support of the war and his criticism of how Bush executed it, before also moving on to suggest that it was indeed possible both to rebuild Iraq and attend to domes-

tic needs. Kerry, who took plenty of political heat from GOP leaders last week for commenting that "Yes, we need a regime change in Baghdad, but we need one in Washington, too," criticized Bush in particular for failing diplomatically before undertaking the war. Referring to the winding down Iraqi war, Kerry said, "Now this administration is laying out all these enormous plans for building roads, schools, hospitals, and the like in Iraq - it's time he [Bush] laid out a plan to do the same thing here in the United States."

Also looking past the war in Iraq to domestic issues here at home, was Senator **Joseph Lieberman** (D-Connecticut), who with another fellow candidate, Representative

Richard Gephardt (D-Missouri) proposed the Iraq resolution last fall. "After I saw that statue of Saddam Hussein fall in Baghdad, I could feel the hopes of children in Iraq for a better life rising and I could feel the hopes of the children in America rising for a safer life here at home," Lieberman said.

Florida U.S. Senator **Bob Graham**, who had voted to oppose the war in Iraq, said he still has no regrets about doing so and said that he feels the invasion of Iraq, no matter how successful, would actually increase the threat of another terrorist attack in the United States. "I believe the war in Iraq has actually reduced our ability to effectively carry out the war against terrorism. At the same time, we have given a pass to some of the countries that have been harboring terrorists so that we could get their vote in the United Nations," Graham said.

Moseley Braun said that if the cost of the war so far was \$80 billion, "that's \$79 billion to much," arguing that the money would be better spent on health care and other domestic priorities here at home.

Sharpton questioned the need for military action, saying, predictably, that he still didn't see any immediate danger from Iraq. Like other war opponents, Sharpton questioned why the focus was on spending so much on war and development of Iraq when the money was needed on domestic issues in America.

Yep, the war against Saddam is winding down, but the (Democratic) war against the policies of George W. Bush is starting to heat up.

Politics and people

Last week, this paper's Mailroom section carried no less than four letters from readers [and there are more this week] about a recent column I wrote on former Vermont Governor **Howard Dean**. Seems some of my readers feel I have been unduly criticizing the former Vermont governor. Ha! Actually, I agree with Dean's well-known stance on legalizing marriage-like civil unions for same-sex couples, his antiwar stance, his longtime support for gay/civil rights, and probably just about everything else the guy allegedly stands for - with the glaring exception of Dr. Dean's staunch op-

position to using medical marijuana by patients suffering from AIDS, cancer, and other serious illnesses. And this guy is a physician? I don't doubt for a minute, as one reader put it, that Howard Dean is a man of "unquestionable character, brave, strong, and a strong politician the likes of which we need more," but his healthcare program is sorely lacking - and will remain so until he changes his attitude on allowing very ill people to use medical pot when it can help them. Simple, isn't it? At this time next year when the country is in the middle of a heated presidential campaign, the war in Iraq will have been put on a back burner, no longer even an issue, but Dean's opposition to medical marijuana surely will be an issue. Meanwhile, my thanks to **C. Shane Southard**, **Brian de los Santos**, **Anne Sutton Broshar**, **Sandra Mix**, and the others who took time to write; keep 'em coming and thanks for reading.

Representative **Zoe Lofgren** (D-San Jose) last week became the first member of Congress to officially endorse former Vermont Governor **Howard Dean** for the Democratic presidential nomination. Meanwhile, California Democratic House members **Cal Dooley** (Fresno), **Dennis Cardoza** (Modesto), and **Ellen Tauscher** (Walnut Creek) have endorsed Senator **Joseph Lieberman** for president.

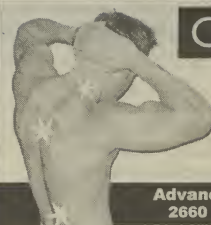
California Republicans could be gearing up for a high-profile gubernatorial primary fight in 2006. From the *Washington Post* comes word that actor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** quietly met last Thursday at the White House with **Karl Rove**, Dubya's top political advisor, and the governor's race in California was reportedly on the agenda. Meanwhile, National Security Adviser **Condoleezza Rice**, a former Stanford University provost, has also been telling California friends that she is "interested" in possibly going after the governor's job in 2006 when Governor **Gray Davis** (D) will be term-out. The Terminator versus the National Security Adviser? Could be fun.

And while the Legislature in Sacramento is on spring break this week, little, if anything, is being done about California's big-time budget crisis. Not to worry, though, since the legislators still pick up their \$99,000 annual salary (not to mention the perks) plus they draw \$125 per day, \$875 per week, in tax-free expense money when they are in session - regardless of whether they're there, say, only three days a week, which is the norm.

Reminds me, here's a memo to Board of Supervisors President **Matt Gonzalez**: Aren't you guys supposed to be getting that raise that San Francisco voters passed last year? I've got a couple of friends on the Civil Service Commission I will speak to if you'd like.

Meanwhile, the cost to park in San Francisco - legally or illegally - will soon go up under a plan given approval by the Board of Supervisors. Parking meter rates would increase by 50 cents an hour throughout the city. Parking at downtown meters, near Union Square or in the Financial District, will jump to \$2 an hour; the board

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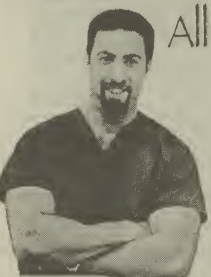
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A taxing taxonomy

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

A friend of mine asked one of those "big questions." It's one for which I don't have much of an answer. To be honest, it's not that I don't have an answer, it's just that the answer I have is so — shall we say — unsatisfactory.

But I'm putting the answer before the question. The question was, to put it bluntly, "What is a woman and how do you know?"

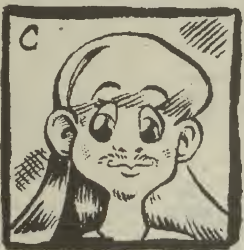
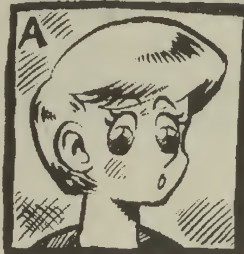
This is the unsatisfactory part. I don't really have an answer.

I would love to remark about being a woman in the same way that Justice Potter Stewart once quipped about pornography, "I don't know how to define it, but I know it when I see it." Even then, I'm not sure I could even fully trust my own senses to pick it out.

So I'll go from another angle. What do I know? I know that my mother is a woman, as is my sister. Both of them have lived in such a gender for all their lives, from the moment they were first wrapped in a pink blanket — or whatever they use nowadays — shortly after birth. They seem to fit into that role just fine, and certainly show no signs of changing. At least none that I'm aware of.

So what makes each of them a woman? Is it something as simple as a doctor declaring them as such at birth? I don't think so, as there are simply too many holes in that assumption — no pun intended. It cannot be simply the

WHICH ONE IS NOT A WOMAN?



absence of a penis that makes someone a woman: aside from the obvious question of intersexed births, there have been plenty of people who were born without a penis who have turned out to be fine men, and more than a few good women who were born with a penis.

The same could be applied to secondary sexual characteristics, or even sex chromosomes. Breasts, a vagina, or XX chromosomes can be found on most women, but it's not absolute enough to apply across

the board. There are still too many variables before one can point to that as a solid answer. There also does not seem to be any specific thing that — should a person have it — bars them from being women.

So it's not physical. I would also contend that it is not social. I think the social implications of a gender can be the effect, not the cause. People make frilly dresses because people buy them for little girls, at least in some Western cultures. Some social issues may be more common for one or the other of these two gender options, but they are not anywhere near absolutes — likely even less than the physical issues.

There's not a standard look, or action, or even secret handshake. A woman can be Anna Nicole Smith or a woman can be Janet Reno. A woman can be a warrior princess, a bleach-blonde bimbo, a domestic goddess, a power-hungry ice queen — or all of these, or none of these, or something else altogether. There is simply no perfect example, only gossamer stereotypes that fall apart at the slightest touch.

In the standard transgender "script," many state they knew what they really were, regardless of physical issues. I would say I went through a few different attempts at figuring out what I was, but I'm a slow learner.

I know — from talking with some of my friends who were quite happy with the gender they were assigned at birth — that few spend a lot of time pondering their gender. Needless to say, few are spending as much time pondering their gender as the average transgender person.

So maybe it is closer to Justice Stewart's famed quote. Maybe it

is just something that a person knows. Maybe it just comes down the some of the same arguments that made for that very pornography decision of which he was a part. It's an issue of community standards.

Whose community, though?

Should I ask all my neighbors if I am a woman? Should I ask other transgender and non-transgender women? Should I write my local congressman or consult my parish priest? The latter, of course, assuming I have such a thing.

There is one last thing I do know. I know that — like my mom, like my sister, like so many others I have known in my time — I am a woman. I have long felt I was one, I feel that now, and it's a term that, by and large, fits my place in society, my physical situation, and all those other things I mentioned above. They are hollow categories, but they are the only ones I have to point to when I speak of my own gender: as Kate Bornstein pointed out in *My Gender Workbook* (quoting from either a Zen master or Donovan), "first there was a mountain, then there was no mountain, then there is."

I like inhabiting this space I think is "woman," whatever that space really is. It has a feeling of rightness that, for example, "man" lacks for me. The woman I am is different from what some other women may be, but all these other women are equally distinct from each other.

So I am left with the same poor answer I started with. I simply do not know. I can feel, I can believe — perhaps it's only a faith-based gender.

I think there is another question that should be added when one asks, "What is a woman and how do you know?" It may sound like a sharp retort of sorts, but I think it's a legitimate query: why does it matter?

That may well be the far more pertinent question. ▼

Gwen Smith apologizes for the male-to-female-ness of the above column. She can be found on the Web in Gay.com's "Transgender Gazebo," and in the newly-revamped www.gwensmith.com.

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Peter Pan flies again

by Dale Carpenter

Picking among the shards of the antiwar movement, I've found a couple of items that lay out the tidy narrative the gay left likes to tell about what it means to be gay. According to this narrative, the authentic gay person matures from being closeted, selfish, and conservative to being out, empathic, and liberal. In the context of the war in Iraq, the progression moves one from pro-war to antiwar. This tale is a comfort to those who tell it, but it is built on confusion and falsehood.

Take the words of the gay marine, Stephen Funk, who applied for conscientious objector status when the Iraq war began. At that opportune moment, Funk was shocked to learn that the mission of the military force that's been training him to kill is to kill.

Explaining his objection to the war, Funk wrote to his commanders that his "moral development" has "been largely affected by the fact that I'm homosexual." He continued: "I believe that as a gay man, someone who is misunderstood by much of the general population, I have a great deal of experience with hatred and oppression."

Now let's grant that gays have suffered hatred and oppression. Let's even grant, for the sake of argument, that this experience gives gays some unique moral insight on human suffering. What follows? What's the connection between Funk's experience with hatred and oppression as a gay man and his opposition to the war?

It surely can't be that he believes the Iraqi regime was widely "misunderstood" and just needs more understanding. Saddam Hussein's aims were clear: to dominate a region of vital importance by any means necessary, including killing his own people, attacking his neighbors, and acquiring the most awful weapons on the planet. If it accomplishes nothing else, the war is putting an end to that.

Perhaps Funk means to say the people of Iraq have been afflicted with hatred and oppression, which is sadly true, and that he identifies with their plight. Yet it's hardly clear that the answer to Iraqis' oppression is to oppose a war freeing them from it. The

more obvious conclusion would be that gays' experience with suffering should lead us to support the war, since we don't want others to suffer as we have. But that would not fit the narrative.

Next, meet one Miles Christian Daniels, who's written a column for gay newspapers congratulating himself on his personal journey from closeted conservative to liberated liberal. As a 14-year-old, Daniels tells us, he was immersed in retrograde patriotism, supported the first Gulf War, embraced traditional morality, and was hidden deep in the closet.

In the familiar narrative, these things are connected. "I was still in the closet in 1991," writes Daniels, "both in terms of my sexual orientation and the way I thought things were supposed to be."

The present finds Daniels a much more enlightened person. He has undergone a "moral metamorphosis" since coming out, much like the advanced "moral development" Funk has achieved. He now regards as "silly" his former acts of patriotism, like singing the national anthem. These days he would be "lucky to stumble through that first line of the 'Star Spangled Banner.'" Morally metamorphosed people would be embarrassed to admit knowing the words.

Daniels' views of war have advanced, too. He has come to understand that there are civilian casualties in war, which in the past, post-closet world view makes all war unacceptable. A few days before American and British forces began risking their lives to oust a murderous tyrant, Daniels stood with antiwar demonstrators "holding a lit candle through a paper cup holder."

Daniels is evidently still religious. He prays for the Iraqi people, "who had asked for none of this." (These are the same people who unanimously "asked" Saddam to remain their leader in an election last fall.) More generously yet – and morally metamorphosed citizens are always generous to America's enemies – Daniels prays for Saddam to stop being such a meanie.

Then we get the clincher, the Great Connection. "I guess, in a way, being gay has been good for me," Daniels observes from a hill-

top. "I've had to learn the hard way what it's like to be thrust on the other side of the enemy lines. And I've felt the pain of those who are hated, spit upon and – for some – even murdered for simply being who they are."

Does this sound familiar? It's the same learning-to-be-liberal-in-the-school-of-hard-knocks story we heard from Funk.

We can look forward to the next stage in the moral development and metamorphosis of Stephen Funk, Miles Christian Daniels, and their gay fellow travelers along the moral high road. That is the stage when they realize this is not a world for Peter Pans; that there are terrorists whose training camps must be pitilessly bombed; that there are nasty dictators who must be decapitated, not assailed with candles and prayers, even if it means innocent lives will be lost; in short, that they live in a complex and dangerous world where grownups face imperfect choices and where it is sometimes our duty to do a little wrong to do a great right.

Most importantly for our purposes, this next stage in their lives is the one where Funk, Daniels, and Co. learn they do not have to live by the ready-made platitudes of the religious right or the gay left. They can live and think for themselves, which is real liberation. ▼

Dale Carpenter is a law professor. He can be reached at OutRight@aol.com.

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Friday, 5pm, Room 4

Our Man Friday

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also approved a series of parking fine hikes. Parking in a street-cleaning zone will cost \$35, a \$5 increase (last year more than 815,000 such tickets were issued for street cleaning violations).

Kamala Harris picked up key support in her race for district attorney this week when she got the endorsement of Arlo Smith, the respected longtime former D.A.

Incidentally, last week's CALPEEK newsletter, written by the politically astute Dick Rosengarten, reported that Terence Hallinan, having been politically wounded by his handling of the conspiracy charges against five SFPD officers, might not ever actually file for re-election. CALPEEK: "There was never any doubt that San Francisco's political right and center had serious questions about Hallinan, but

now anti-Hallinan sources speculate that even Hallinan's allies on the left may be looking for someone new," and adds that "speculation is that Hallinan will wait until the very last moment, decide not to run, and then will endorse Asst. D.A. Jim Hammer, the prosecutor who handled the high-profile dog mauling case last year."

In Arkansas, the ACLU sued the Pulaski County Special School District in federal court last week in Little Rock in the case of a gay student. The suit contends that officials violated constitutional rights of the boy, Thomas McLaughlin, 14, of Jacksonville, by calling his parents to tell them that he is gay, preaching to him, and forbidding him to discuss his sexual orientation. In a letter to the school last month, the ACLU asked officials for a guarantee that McLaughlin's constitutional rights would be respected.

And how was your week? ▼

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VALLEJO

Murder suspect

◀ page 1

against a window at the end of a hallway in the hotel, just down the hall from the couple's room. Yvonne said that it looked like Neal was trying to push Flagler out the window. Flagler then pushed Neal away and into a wall across from the window, the neighbors said.

"How much more can you beat on me Michael?" the witnesses heard Flagler say. "How much more is there left?"

After Flagler pushed Neal away, the witnesses said that Neal laughed and mockingly said: "Oh, you're fighting back, you're fighting back."

"It shocked the shit out of him because she doesn't hit back," said Johnson.

The two witnesses said Flagler stabbed Neal with a kitchen knife while he was leaning against the wall. Yvonne said she then saw Flagler stab Neal again after he staggered into a narrow side hallway. Neal appeared to be stabbed about five times, the witnesses said.

"Cindy had to know it was going to be her or him," said Yvonne. "Fortunately, it was him."

Pattern of abuse

Flagler walked down the hall and eventually walked to a gas station, a block away, where she was arrested. Yvonne and Johnson said Flagler's expression changed markedly just after the stabbing with a look of relief and peace on her face.

Three neighbors at the hotel where the couple lived for at least two years described to the B.A.R. a pattern of severe and sometimes

daily abuse they say Neal inflicted on Flagler. They said the fatal stabbing was the first time Flagler ever fought back.

"He was always beating her up," said Johnson. "He was no good and I hate to say that about anybody."

Johnson's partner, Sherri Smith, shook her head in agreement. Smith added that while Neal was despised in the building, Flagler was very popular.

"Everyone liked her," Smith said. "[Neal] was playing off her personality."

"He pushed her," Smith added. "He wasn't the victim. He killed that little fire inside of her."

The neighbors say they are convinced that if Flagler didn't kill Neal, even after he had staggered in a side hallway, he would have continued to come after her and kill her. They said they didn't know why Flagler stayed with Neal despite the alleged beatings but they said they suspected it may have been out of fear.

Just a week before the stabbing, Smith said she asked Neal directly why Flagler stayed with him.

"He tacitly went around that question without answering," Smith said. "He didn't want to admit to anything."

The neighbors said that Neal had just gotten out of jail two months ago. They said he was locked up the last time for violating his parole for beating Flagler. They said police were called to the hotel several times after getting complaints about domestic violence between the couple. The last time, they said, parole authorities locked him up for several months.

Neighbors said that neither Flagler nor Neal had a job and that Flagler was fighting drug ad-

iction and attended a methadone clinic every day. Neal, they said, was a "crack-head" who lived off of Flagler's disability check.

Flagler is being held in the jail unit at San Francisco General Hospital. Johnson said her treatment there may be connected to the amount of medication she took, about 50 pills a day, including hormones.

Johnson said Flagler phoned her from SFGH last Saturday, tearfully telling her: "I didn't mean to do it. I didn't mean for this to happen."

In the summer 2001 newsletter for the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center, Flagler wrote a column thanking the center for helping her cope with HIV.

"If it weren't for the people here at TARC, I don't think I would be here," she wrote.

Flagler noted that she came to San Francisco from New Jersey in 1998.

She added that she first learned she was HIV-positive in prison when she was tested without her consent.

She said that the diagnosis was devastating but she was able to get through it after getting a card with 10,000 signatures from inmates and staff "telling me how much they still loved me and cared about me."

The San Francisco Police homicide department issued a brief press release last week announcing that Flagler, whom they described as a man, killed her domestic partner, confessed to the crime, and is being charged with murder.

Neighbors said Flagler had not had sexual reassignment surgery and they didn't know whether that was something she ever wanted. ▼

DP rule changes

◀ page 1

man and a woman and argues there is no legal reason to treat domestic spouses the same as married couples.

"I find there simply is no comparison between marriage and 'domestic partner' relationships, or in the substance of their respective legal force and effect," Strong writes.

Current San Francisco Assessor Mabel Teng has stuck by Ward's ruling, refusing to rescind it at the request of lawyers from the state tax board. Teng, who will announce today that she is in support of the proposed changes, is the only assessor in the state to publicly voice approval for Migden's measures.

The city is facing a possible lawsuit from a conservative group which pushed the homophobic Proposition 22 that voters approved in 2000. The measure defined marriage as solely between a man and a woman and could be used to argue that San Francisco's

ruling violates state law.

Teng would not discuss the prospects of the lawsuit when asked about it Wednesday. But she did say she is working with the city attorney's office to strengthen and expand the original ruling. Recently, Teng said she ruled in favor of not reassessing property in the case of domestic partners dissolving their relationship.

"I realize I face tremendous political obstacles of being the lone assessor in the state standing up for domestic partner rights," said Teng. "I think San Francisco has a different role to play. We should set the pace in domestic partner rights on home ownership. Just like what we did with the equal benefits ordinance, we are going to do this with home ownership for domestic partners. It is only fair and the right thing to do."

She also expressed her disappointment in seeing her fellow assessors oppose the proposed changes. Though she said she is not surprised by their reaction.

"I think the assessor association needs forward-looking perspective," said Teng, who said she was one of only two women, and one of the only minorities, in attendance at a meeting of the association in December. "It really needs to come to grips with the reality that the emerging homeowner community is inclusive of LGBT partners as well as immigrants. I think they are definitely lacking that perspective."

If the tax board votes to accept the proposed changes, then there will be a public comment period of 60 days before the board makes a final determination on the proposal. Gay rights activists have focused on two board members in particular, state Controller Steve Westly and board member John Chiang, who represents the Los

Angeles area, in trying to drum up support.

Both are Democrats. Neither one has taken a public stand on their vote, but there are indications they will vote in favor of the changes.

Lisa Caselego, Westly's press secretary, said he does not commit before a vote takes place. But in a questionnaire for a gay-rights group he filled out during his campaign last year, he expressed support for the issue.

"As Controller I am committed to using CalPERS and CalSTRS to expand domestic partnership benefits. Offering domestic partnerships makes business sense and it is the right thing to do," Westly wrote in answer to a question from the California Alliance for Pride and Equality. "I will continue to voice my support for gay marriage and will use my seat on the Board of Equalization and Franchise Tax Board to make tax policy easier for same-sex couples."

A spokesman for Chiang, who was traveling outside of the country this week, would not comment on how Chiang will vote next week. He did acknowledge Chiang is supportive of giving domestic partners equal protection under the tax codes.

"He never takes an absolute stand on issues prior to a vote," said John Thiella, Chiang's chief deputy. "You can be assured by all of his history and concern for domestic partners that he wants to see fair and reasonable rules be adopted so there is not reappraisal of domestic partners' property when one of the partners dies."

"The only issue here is how we get there, not whether we get there," Thiella added.

In fact, Chiang brokered a deal behind closed doors last year to

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Davis said to object to latest foster care bill

by Matthew S. Bajko

As a bill that would protect gay and lesbian youth in the state's foster care system moves its way through the state Assembly, its chances of being signed into law by Governor Gray Davis remain in question.

Last year, Davis vetoed AB2651, which would have required foster care parents to receive sensitivity training about sexual orientation and had a substantial cost to it. The sponsor of the bill, Assemblywoman Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park), rewrote the new bill, AB458, in order to avoid a repeat veto by the governor.

The bill, which cleared the Assembly's Human Services Committee earlier this month, would protect all foster children in the state from discriminatory treatment, including discrimination or harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or HIV/AIDS status.

AB458 would prohibit discrimination and harassment against foster youth, foster parents, other foster household members, and foster agency staff based on a number of factors, including race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV/AIDS status. In addition, the bill requires foster parents and other caregivers to receive training on the nondiscrimi-

ination requirements.

According to a spokesman, Davis would like to see an opt-out provision added to the bill, allowing prospective foster care parents a choice not to receive the training.

"He doesn't take positions on bills till they get to his desk, but he has said publicly if the foster care bill is revenue neutral and allows an opt-out provision, he would like to sign that bill," said openly gay Eric Bauman, a special assistant to the governor. "If a potential foster care parent doesn't want to take the training on sexual orientation, they have a right to opt out of it."

Bauman was responding to a reporter's question during a phone press conference on April 3 with gay media outlets throughout the state. He added that by opting out of the training, those parents should not be given gay or lesbian youth as foster children.

The bill is expected to be cost neutral, according to a spokeswoman for Chu, who added the only additional training the bill would require is for foster parents to be told about the nondiscrimination clause.

"People are not reading the bill correctly," said the spokeswoman, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "During the regular training sessions foster parents go through, they would be told they can't discriminate against kids based on these 11 things listed in the bill."

According to her spokeswoman, Chu has not heard directly from the governor or his staff about his stance on the bill. She said they have heard through the media and other sources of the governor's position.

"We asked the governor's office about it. We haven't received any confirmed answer from them," said the spokeswoman.

Numerous groups are supporting the bill, including the National Association of Social Workers, California chapter; Equality California, formerly the California Alliance for Pride and Equality; the American Civil Liberties Union; the California chapter of the National Organization for Women; Children's Advocacy Institute; and the California Coalition for Youth.


"It would be extremely disappointing if the governor vetoed the bill after changes were made by Assemblymember Chu to address concerns he raised previously," said Geoff Kors, executive director of Equality California.

The bill passed out of the Human Services Committee on a party-line vote, with four Democrats voting yes and two Republicans voting no. It now goes to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

"Passing legislation to protect these vulnerable members of our society should be supported by every member of the Legislature and the governor," said Kors. ▼

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LGBT center

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Specifically, the problems the center faces are daunting:

Executive director

Leaderless at the end of the month, the center is looking for a new executive director. The board has hired a search firm to look for a candidate who, according to Wiener, needs to be "a strong and visible leader, a very strong manager, and a prolific fundraiser."

"They need to be out there in the community, and raising a lot of money," he said.

While he won't name names at this point, Wiener said that the search company has presented the board with several "very strong" candidates. In a timetable that consultant Wolfred called "amazingly fast," Wiener and that they hope to have a signed deal by the end of May – with a new executive director in place by mid-July.

Meanwhile, it appears the center will be run by Wiener, Gerson, and the board.

When Cheu was hired last March, Wiener commented that he was delighted to be handing the management of the center over to the new executive director, and that the center was entering a new phase – with an advisory board of directors and a working executive director.

Asked how he felt about having to step back into a daily management role, Wiener, a full-time

lawyer, said, "It's like déjà vu all over again."

Staff layoffs

The center has let most of its program management staff go this month in a series of layoffs and forced resignations, including CFO Bonnie Anderson, Program Director Anne Tamar-Mattis, publicist Jason Riggs, plus a development associate, Ian Mazinsky, and three others.

With these cuts and other savings, according to Wiener, the board hopes to save \$450,000-\$500,000 of its \$1.9 million annual operating budget, which Wiener said he hopes to be able to trim to as little as \$1.3 million.

When the center opened, Cheu said he thought he had \$3 million a year with which to work.

Gerson said that the layoffs this month "will make sure the staff matches the mission" – a mission that, lacking any secure funding for ongoing operations, is likely to get less ambitious.

Large debt

The center is operating with a huge debt hanging over its head. It owes its bankers \$2.3 million in combined construction financing and a line of credit for operations. A balloon payment of \$800,000 is still due on May 1, although Gerson said that they have negotiated with First Republic Bank, the lender, to postpone that payment for a year to May 1, 2004. That deal hadn't been finally inked at press time.

The center had promised to disclose current financial operating data, but would not do so by press time, instead providing the B.A.R. with a nearly year-old financial statement.

Gerson said that the center has not borrowed from its line of credit since last fall. "We're not going into further debt," she said.

But in the past, the center has spent lavishly on salaries, with



Executive Director Brian Cheu

over half a million dollars going out in 2002. The executive director position paid over \$100,000 a year, but Cheu and other staffers took cuts throughout the year. "Professional service contracts," that Wiener claimed were mainly construction related, amounted to \$424,000 in 2002. Special events cost \$125,000, and there was \$24,000 in telephone costs.

Lawsuit

The center has been sued by its contractors, because, the contractors allege, the center has refused to pay the final bill for the building's construction. This retention fee, the center's financial statement acknowledges, is in the range of \$850,000.

The center's board and staff are very tight-lipped about the litigation, which has been ongoing since October 2001, five months before the building opened. But Dana Van Gorder, who was on the

board at the time, said that the center has reasonable justification to withhold the payment.

"Leaks, windows installed incorrectly, cracks in the cement floors, there's a whole list of items that still need to be corrected," Van Gorder said. "The HVAC system is not calibrated correctly, so the heating and cooling bills are high. There are some issues with the electrical system and the ability to control some of the lighting."

Wiener said that the contractors would like to force the issue into arbitration, for a speedy settlement. The center is trying to force a jury trial – a much slower process that could take years.

"We had a sound legal basis to withhold the retention," insisted Wiener.

But whatever the outcome of the lawsuit, at the moment – from a review of its old financial data – it appears that the center would have a difficult time making a payment even close to the size the contractors are demanding.

The contractors have slapped a \$2.4 million mechanic's lien on the building, which they are entitled to do without proving the facts of their case.

Van Gorder said that he thinks the contractor issue "is a nuisance, but it's not a meaningful issue."

Fundamentals

There have been at least three gay community centers in the city's history. The earliest was on Sixth Street at Jessie Alley and opened in 1966 as part of the Society for Individual Rights. Two others on Page and Grove streets operated in the early 1970s.

What's the difference between those places and this new large center?

According to historian Susan Stryker, those places were mainly for gay men.

"And this one," she said, "is much more expensive."

The \$15.5 million building opened last March with a complicated mission. It hoped to support itself by renting rooms in the facility, while producing programming that would make the center a focal point for the LGBT com-

munity in San Francisco.

Conceived at the height of the AIDS epidemic, ex-board member Van Gorder said that the center was to be a remedy to the isolation that many gays and lesbians felt at the time.

"The notion of what's supposed to happen there is a good one," he said.

But the center has had a hard time finding programs that would either be self-supporting, or for which the center could find independent grant funding.

So the center cut its hours in November and is closed every weekday morning and on Sundays.

Incubator

One promising idea, and potentially one of the most rewarding programs, was to have the center act as an incubator for small nonprofit groups. The building includes a warren of tiny windowless offices on the fourth floor that was intended to provide inexpensive space for budding nonprofits, like Our Family Coalition, an LGBT family group.

OFC worked with former program director Tamar-Mattis to get several large grants to support the group's operations. OFC wanted to expand. It hired a new executive director, and has just taken on a second employee to help build its schedule of events for LGBT families with kids. But when the agency asked for more space in the center, the answer was no.

The group started looking for other places and found downtown offices in the Flood Building provided by the Horizon Foundation, an LGBT foundation. There they found other LGBT organizations, like the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

"We've got critical mass here," said Charlie Spiegel, the former director who arranged the deal. "The Flood Building, for better or worse, is the incubator space the community center had in mind."

"They make more money renting rooms in two-hour blocks than on leases," Van Gorder said of

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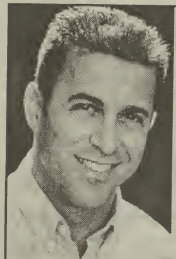
San Francisco HIV Health Services Planning Council



The community planning group that oversees the prioritization and allocation of Ryan White CARE Act Title 1 and 11 funds (used to provide services for people living with HIV/AIDS in San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties) invites and encourages members of the public to attend their meetings and provide public comment.

The Planning Council usually meets the fourth Monday of each month from 4:30 to 7:30 PM in the Mayor's Conference Room (Room 201), San Francisco City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett (on Van Ness Avenue, between Grove and McAllister Streets.)

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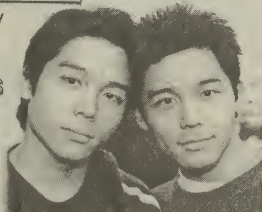
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COMMUNITY NEWS

LGBT center

◀ previous page

the center. That may be part of the arithmetic that went into the decision to have room rentals, but it has made it virtually impossible for the nonprofits that become successful to stay in the center that nurtured them.

Social spaces

Another nagging failure is that the center has not become the social center its founders hoped it would be.

"The center needs to broaden its appeal to get more kinds of people in," said Van Gorder. "The center has more work to do - it's spent a lot of time building its collaborations. It now has to create events that appeal the circuit boys and the African American dykes, and lots and lots of others."

A proposed cafe on the first floor has been vacant since the building opened last March because the center has not been able to find a tenant who would build out the space and operate it on the terms the center wanted. Privately, some say that management muffed an opportunity from one bidder who went away disgruntled. They would not elaborate.

What to do

Nearly all credit the center with having worked hard to build some

interesting programs, and get people through the doors of the building.

"We've been very successful in being a place where people can come and gather," said Gerson. "We bring 2,200 people through the door every week. We have over 300 events a month. Virtually every LGBT group has used the center for something. That's a success. Now we need to figure out how to use those successes to be financially successful."

Gerson said that as soon as the board has a new executive director, it will start a strategic planning process to "re-purpose" the center. She said that the Mayor's Office of Community Development has offered the center some seed money for the process.

Pat Martel, who is now the head of San Francisco's Public Utilities Commission and who served on the board from the center's conception until last year, said that she is optimistic for the center's future.

She said that because the center is crafted on a model, as a landlord, where there is "absolutely no experience," she expected that the first year would be rocky.

She suggested that partnering with another major tenant, to fill the building in its underutilized daytime hours, might help solve the revenue problems, but cautioned that the board must strike a balance between that goal and

providing for the larger community's needs - whatever those are.

"The new executive director must focus on fundraising," Martel said, "and building a longer term development plan that doesn't rely on one revenue source but gets diversified funding."

"It's going to be some lean times over the next several months," Martel added. "But mainly, I feel very confident that the community will support it. We who have been there will always be there for the center."

Meanwhile other community leaders have volunteered their time and effort to restart the building's mission.

Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco), who served on the center's board and was instrumental in getting the project started, said that he appreciated Gerson and Wiener's "good, honest work on behalf of the community," and that he hoped that the center will get broader community support.

Supervisor Bevan Dufty, in whose district the center lies, said that he invited himself to one of the center's board meetings. While he commented that "I know they need to change their plan," he vowed that he would help raise money for the center in the business community.

"But we all need to be involved for the center to succeed," Dufty said. ▼

DP rule changes

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ensure the full board did not address the San Francisco ruling and issue of domestic partner property rights until after Migden and Westly were elected. While speaking before the Lesbian and Gay Caucus of the state Democratic Party in March, Chiang thanked the gay Democrats for sending him two allies on the board.

And in a letter to constituents earlier this month, Chiang wrote, "It is my strong hope that reasonable and fair rules can be adopted to assure that reappraisals of residential real property, held by registered domestic partners, not occur after the death of a partner. For some time, concerned individuals as well as elected officials have worked to fashion a process which will provide this humanitarian security to partners who, in their grieving period, should not be faced with an unfortunate and potentially dramatic recalculation of the taxable value of their homes."

The two Republican members, Bill Leonard from the Sacramento-Central Valley region, and Claude Parrish, from San Diego, are expected to vote no.

"We are feeling good about [the vote]," Migden told the *Bay Area Reporter* this week. "We are asking for letters to Controller Westly and Mr. Chiang. Not to say



State Controller Steve Westly

we have reservations, just we don't make assumptions here."

Although Republicans are vocal opponents of taxes, Migden said since the changes would alleviate economic pressure on gay and lesbian couples, she is doubtful the two Republicans will support her proposal.

"I will lobby my Republican colleagues but I am not as hopeful of the prospects of their supporting the issue. Republicans are not interested in support for domestic partners," said Migden. "This would actually be a tax abatement which Republicans favor. They favor taxing people less. This would be less. Having said that,

this would be less for gay couples which they don't approve of."

Groups such as Lambda Letters, Equality California (formerly CAPE), and Marriage Equality California have launched a write-in campaign to urge all the members of the board to vote in favor of the proposals moving forward. Advocates say the issue is of vital importance, especially as the gay community ages and more and more couples face possible eviction due to the hefty property tax bills reappraisals bring.

"There are couples who have lost their house because of this issue," said Molly McKay, MECA's Northern California executive director. "This is a real fear that people live with day to day, and I think a lot of same-sex couples who have been together a number of years do everything they can to protect one another in case one dies before the other. But this particular right is something they can't do anything about."

Migden's office is asking members of the LGBT community to send e-mails of support for the rule changes to both Chiang at john.chiang@boe.ca.gov and Westly at steve.westly@sco.ca.gov.

Migden is also asking supporters to attend the Board of Equalization meeting to show support for the proposal. The board is expected to address the issue at 2 p.m. Wednesday in its board chambers, 450 N Street, in Sacramento. ▼

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'Truth in Trials Act' would allow medical marijuana defense

by Bob Roehr

The federal government has continued to prosecute people for the medical use of marijuana even in those states that have passed laws allowing such use.

The most notable recent case was the conviction of Oakland, California resident Ed Rosenthal when his attorney was not allowed to present the fact that Rosenthal was raising the seedlings for medical use under city regulations. Several jurors were outraged at their verdict when they later learned all of the facts.

The "Truth in Trials Act" (H.R. 171), introduced in Congress by Representative Sam Farr (D-California) on April 10, would amend the Controlled Substances Act to "allow persons facing prosecution for marijuana-related offenses to have a right to demonstrate that their activities were performed in compliance with state law regarding the medical use of marijuana."

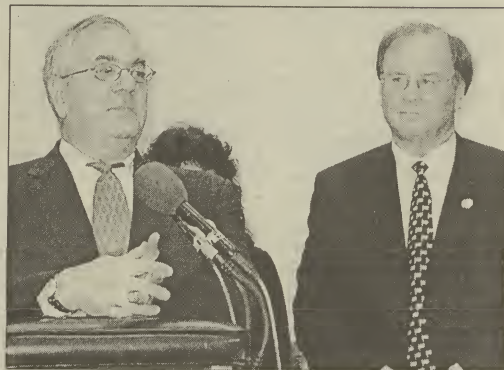
"If the jury finds that the defendant was following the state medical marijuana laws, they should be allowed to acquit. It is that simple," Farr said at a Capitol Hill news conference. The bill "does not encourage behavior that has not been approved at the state level."

"This bill is about justice in our court system. It is about due process, it is not about pot. It is about transparency in our trial system. It is about allowing all of the facts to be presented in front of jurors, not just some of the facts," said Farr, who represents the central coastal region of California.

The legislation directly addresses a 2001 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that there is no constitutional right to offer a medical necessity defense in the courts.

"Congress has been way behind the public on this issue," said Farr. "One man in Washington [Attorney General John Ashcroft] has prevented the people of California from exercising their right to vote." The California medical marijuana initiative passed overwhelmingly in 1996. Maryland is about to become the eighth state to allow such use.

"We have witnessed a truly great injustice. Law-abiding citizens have been prosecuted and persecuted by the federal govern-



Congressmen Barney Frank, left, and Sam Farr.

ment for growing marijuana for medical purposes," said Representative Barbara Lee (D-California), who represents Oakland.

"This is truly a travesty on several levels. The people of California have clearly spoken. They believe that this matter is between patients and doctors, not patients and the police." The fact that Rosenthal was growing marijuana for medical use "was banished from the courtroom," Lee said. "Justice is supposed to be about truth. There was no truth and justice in this case."

Representative Barney Frank (D-Massachusetts) described the bill as "a defense of the judicial process." He argued, "It is a procedural point that keeps undeniably accurate information from a juror."

According to Frank, Ashcroft's agenda "consists of two major criminal threats. One is conspiracies to blow up parts of the United States, and two, conspiracies to alleviate pain. Those are the two major preoccupations of this Justice Department."

Marney Craig, one of the jurors in the Rosenthal trial who has been most active in decrying the

injustice of the proceedings, described "the awful, sinking feeling during the trial that something wasn't right. We knew there was something wrong and yet we were so intimidated by the system and felt so trapped by the instructions that we were given we didn't feel that we had any choice."

She called the bill "a huge step in the right direction." It will help to prevent injustice to patients and their caregivers.

"If we don't get this [bill] through fairly quickly, our conservative colleagues are going to be guilty of extraordinary hypocrisy," said Frank. "They are the ones who denounce the criminal justice system because of what they consider to be hyper-technical interferences" through exclusionary rules on how evidence was gathered.

Conservative Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-California) currently is the only Republican among the 23 cosponsors. Frank hopes that Republican members "particularly in states where this has passed in referendums, would urge the leadership to at least give it a hearing" in committee. But he is not optimistic that will occur. ▼

Miss Trans Globe contest Sat.

by Zak Szymanski

Given the current state of international affairs, there is no better time to watch beauty contestants declare their hope for "world peace" and raise money for local HIV/AIDS programs in the process.

The Miss Trans Globe pageant takes place this Saturday, April 19 at the Herbst Theatre. Presented by the Filipino Task Force on AIDS, the annual pageant is the only contest of its kind in the United States, where transgender beauties from all over compete for the title and privilege of serving as spokesmodels for transgender health and well-being.

Contestants will compete in preliminary interviews, national costume, swimsuit, and evening gown competitions, and cash prizes and gifts will be awarded. The evening is emceed by Tita Aida and Asia SF's Viktoriya La Voovah.

"We are looking for someone

who can be out there, be vocal about transgender health, and can educate the general community about transgender issues," said Victor Hall, FTFA's executive director.

FTFA currently runs three programs for the Filipino and Asian Pacific Islander community: Tambayan, for gay, bisexual, and questioning men; TGIF, for transgenders; and Tao Po, for Filipino social, civic, and church organizations in San Francisco and San Mateo counties. The San Francisco Department of Public Health and the National Minority AIDS Council have reported that Filipinos have the highest rates of HIV infection among APIs in California.

Tickets to Saturday's Miss Trans Globe pageant are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door; all proceeds benefit FTFA.

For tickets, call City Box Office at (415) 392-4400, or FTFA at (415) 920-2630. More information about the organization is available at www.ftfa.org. ▼

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries must be typed and no longer than 200 words. Please follow normal rules of capitalization — and no poetry. We reserve the right to edit for style, clarity, grammar, and taste.

If you're submitting a photo of the deceased, write their name on the back. If you include a SASE for the photo's return, write the person's name on the inside of the envelope flap. All obituaries must include a contact name and phone number. They must be submitted within a year of the death.

Deadline for obituaries is Monday at 5 p.m., with the exception of special display ad obituaries, which must be submitted by Friday at 3 p.m.

James Gerard Bernard

September 15, 1953 — April 5, 2003



19 he was fat.

The party years trimmed him down: he was cute as a button and loved by many people in many ways. Jimmy was smart (class president), added, deeply compassionate, and a giddy brat.

This cross between a computer and a gerbil is mourned by his lover of 23 years, Bar, and true-hearted sisters on both sides: Aletha, Diane, Jean, and Bonner.

Very special thanks to our care-giving family at Laguna Honda Hospital's AIDS ward. A service will be scheduled there the week of April 21st.

Jimmy grew up in central Maine, the wonder-boy in a strong, adoring French Canadian family. Part of his access to a broader world was Gourmet Cookbook, and when he "ran away" to San Francisco at

Gene Raymond Dalton



Dalton, Gene Raymond — of San Francisco and Gretna, Virginia. Died at the age of 56 on February 26, 2003 at his home in San Francisco. Gene is survived by his partner, Gregory Epley. Born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland, Gene entered the service when he graduated high school. After serving in Okinawa among other postings during Viet Nam, Gene was discharged by the Navy at Treasure Island in 1968. Once he crossed the bridge, San Francisco became his home. Settling for a time in Chinatown, he would watch the building of the Transamerica pyramid while laying the foundation of his art career.

Well known in San Francisco's Bohemian art world of the '70s and '80s, especially for his seminal Graffiti show of 1982, and his Nuclear Family series, Gene's last exhibition was The Illustrated Plate show of 1999. A co-founder of the CNA gallery and later of the Smoke and Mirrors Gallery on Brannan St. Gene was always an enthusiastic supporter of his fellow artists. Appreciated for his humor and impromptu performances, Gene is mourned by a wide range of friends, all of whom are invited to a Celebration of Gene's Life Cocktail Party at Jelly's, Pier 50, on Thursday, April 24, 2003, at 6 p.m.

William "Bill" Divita aka Larissa Campbell Winchell



help his community by raising funds for

Entered into Eternal Rest March 31st 2003. His loving parents, Audrey and Joe, and many, many friends survive him. As his Alter Ego, Larissa Campbell Winchell, he worked tirelessly to help his community by raising funds for

charitable organizations. As a supporter of the Imperial Star Empire, Inc., he further showed his dedication by serving as a spokesperson for the organization on two separate occasions.

Don't grieve for Bill, for now he's free. He's following the path God had laid you see. He took God's hand when he heard him call; He turned his back and left it all. He could not stay another day. To laugh, to love, to work, to play. Tasks left undone must stay that way; He found His peace at the Break of day. Be not burdened with times of sorrow, He would wish you the sunshine of tomorrow. His life was full, he savored much, Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch. Perhaps his time seemed all too brief, don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your hearts and peace to thee, God wanted Bill so; He set him free...T.T.B.M.A.D.S.

Douglas Brian Knutzen

November 1, 1963 — March 10, 2003



Our dear friend Douglas Knutzen passed away on March 10, 2003. He was 39 years old. Douglas was born in Bremerton, Washington, but made San Francisco his home for many years. He worked as a caterer and was very proud of the popular deli that he managed up until his death.

Douglas was drawn to this city for many reasons. It brought out his beautiful smile, his contagious laugh, and sometimes, his alter ego "Lily" would speak to her audience, demonstrating his uncanny wit! All that was Douglas Knutzen will be sorely missed by those that knew and loved him.

Survivors include his mother, M. Lynne Johnson of Gig Harbor, Washington; his father, Gilbert J. Knutzen and his sister Holly Keener, both of Bremerton, Washington; his brother, Eric D. Knutzen, serving in the Army with Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Middle

East, and many others.

Please join us at The Castro Country Club at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 3rd, to celebrate his life, and support the club that he loved so much.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that memorial donations be made to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

Ken Smith

Ken passed away March 17, 2003, at his home in Palm Springs, of a heart attack. He was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and lived in South Bend, Indiana, Chicago, San Francisco, and finally in Palm Springs. He was in the U.S. Army, stationed in Germany. He worked in the

public relations department for Commercial Clearing House for many years in Chicago and later in San Rafael. Upon retiring he went into the bar business. He was part owner of Trax Bar on Haight Street for 16 years. He instituted many charitable events at the bar during those years, and served on the board of the Tavern Guild. He became acquainted with and fell in love with Palm Springs, where he moved two years ago. He is survived by a sister, Faith, of Brecksville, Ohio, and a brother, Donald, of Cary, Illinois.

KA held court at Trax all those years and was well known for his "Lavish buffet." We miss you KA, and oh what memories. We will take your advice and "dance faster."

K.

IN MEMORIAM
THOMAS ("Tommy") W. L. DARAGO

September 5, 1949 - April 17, 2002



I miss your wonderful smile, your laughter, your corny limericks, your funny "Sister Annina" stories, I miss your warmth, your hugs and kisses, that child-like glow and excitement over the next cruise, hearing you play your songs on the piano. I miss your presence, those quiet nights listening to music or watching T.V., sharing the fascinating places we visited, and people we met together, many now no more.

We were in our cabin on a river cruise, that Spring afternoon, having just left Lyon, still in the French wine country, I held your hand, as it turned cold, and you slipped away from me, without a sound, yet with a smile of resignation. I shouted and cried, but you had to join those gone before, whom you yearned so often to see: your Daddy, your Teddy, my Aunt Marie. Yes, even those who caused you pain and sorrow. You sought that elusive reconciliation, possible only in death. And you left me to follow my own path in sadness and loneliness until God says: "Come join him, you have suffered enough."

Your Jimmy

Event turns eating out into fundraiser for AIDS

by Matthew S. Bajko

For years the Stop AIDS Project has found the work it does hamstrung by federal regulations, attacked by conservative lawmakers, and repeatedly questioned and reviewed by health officials in Atlanta.

All because the agency is unafraid to use in-your-face tactics and unabashedly frank language to keep gay guys from getting HIV.

Wanting to be able to produce

programs and launch campaigns not ruled over by Washington's bureaucratic eye, the agency last year took part in "Dining Out For Life," turning a night dining out into a money-maker for its programs. Last year, participating restaurants donated \$30,000 to the agency.

"All of the funds we raise are unrestricted which is very important for our budget. It helps us cover expenses not included in our contracts, including some administration costs and salaries,"

said the agency's spokeswoman Shana Krochmal. "The more unrestricted money we have, the more workshops we can put on no matter if the content is controversial."

The agency is once again throwing the fundraiser, which will take place this Wednesday, April 23. This year, the agency hopes to raise \$100,000.

Before even one plate has been served, Stop AIDS has already raised \$47,000 from corporate

page 19 ►

Club celebrates five years of two-steps

by Matthew S. Bajko

The Sundance Saloon, the only place for gay and lesbian country western dancers to two-step and line dance in San Francisco, turns five years old this weekend.

The Sunday night gatherings not only provide a friendly space for country western aficionados to meet, but the organizers of the event also introduce the uninitiated to the ways of two-stepping and line dancing. At every event lessons are given to those unfamiliar with the moves and steps required to dance along to the music.

The weekly dances launched on April 12, 1998 and first took place at the King Street Garage, the dance space behind Club Townsend. When Audrey Joseph shut down the club last summer, the Sundance events moved to

Gus Bean's club *space550 on Barneveld Avenue.

Regulars of the events are so devoted to keeping Sundance alive, that when a new dance floor was needed at Bean's club in order for the group to hold its event there, Saloon members raised \$20,000 in two months. Then, a crew of volunteers spent five days installing it.

The club attracts more than 200 people to its events, and has spawned its own nonprofit organization to keep things running smoothly. The Sundance Association for Country-Western Dancing has also become a fixture at the city's gay street festivals, setting up its own stage, and helps to raise money for other nonprofits.

The group has raised more than \$25,000 for such charities as the AIDS/Breast Cancer Emergency Funds and the Bay Area Breast Cancer Network. It also throws an annual weekend con-

ference, the Sundance Stompede and a corresponding gala, the Hoedown, which raises money for the AIDS Emergency Fund.

This November, the annual weekend will also double as the semi-annual convention of the International Association of Gay and Lesbian Country-Western Dance Clubs. Hundreds of country western dancers from around the world are expected to descend on the city.

To celebrate all of its achievements over the past five years, the Sundance Saloon is throwing itself a party this Sunday night at *space550. Admission will be free and entertainment and souvenirs will be provided.

Dance instructions will take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. and the event will officially kickoff at 7:30, ending at 11 p.m.

For information call (415) 820-1403 or visit the club's Web site at www.dancesaloon.org. ▼

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A run in the rain



Participants in the San Francisco Frontrunners' annual Little Black Dress run Saturday, April 12 didn't let heavy rain dampen their enthusiasm. More than 75 runners from San Francisco and beyond took part in the event, including Supervisor Bevan Dufty, center, in wig. The LGBT running club will host its 24th annual Pride Run event on June 28. For more info, visit www.sffrontrunners.org.

Sports Complex

◀ page 18

mer organizer Darryl Gregory, who had played on a college team.

Booboo bears

Naturally, with so much rough and tumble play, there are bound to be some injuries.

Aside from a few broken fingers, and a player crashing into the wall at Collingwood Park (where they used to play), the group has had only a few major accidents, including a broken arm, and a player who suffered a concussion, and recovered after a hospital stay, but stopped playing.

To maintain safety, McGill said, "We're working on the idea of coming up with more national rules. They're into a lot less contact. The focus becomes not to have the impactive physical contact of regular football. We've incorporated those rules for safety."

"We've worked to cut it down, with penalties, no stiff-arming, and no diving at players to get the flag."

Despite not attending Gay Games VI last year, McGill will soon relocate to Australia to get a master's degree in human resources at the University of Sydney. He hopes to be an unofficial ambassador of flag football in the land where rugby is king.

Wish him luck, and cheer him and the other Shockwaves on next weekend.

Gay Super Bowl II takes place April 26 at Crocker Amazon at Moscow and Geneva streets. Finals are Sunday, April 27, at St. Mary's Recreation Center in lower Bernal Heights.

For info, directions, and practice schedules, visit www.sfs shockwaves.com.

AIDS fundraiser

◀ page 17

sponsors, Abbot Laboratories, Tanqueray, and the Russian River winery La Crema. Four restaurants have already told the agency they will be writing checks for over \$2,500.

And the event has now grown into a Peninsula-wide night out, with restaurants in San Bruno (La Creperie Du Monde) and Palo Alto (Nouveau Trattoria) signed on as participants. In all, nearly 70 establishments have agreed to take part in the event. (A full listing of venues is available online at www.diningoutforlife.com. Use the scroll at the bottom of the screen to go to the San Francisco page.)

Drip dry run

Despite the torrential rain last Saturday, April 12, the annual Little Black Dress Run participants "purse-evered" in a variety of fashionable, if not sopping wet, couture and ready-to-wear outfits.

More than 75 runners from San Francisco, Sacramento, the East Bay, Portland, and Toronto (Canada), festively frolicked in the forest.

"When the runners got about one-half mile down Kennedy Drive, the rain dumped on them," said organizer Anne Ludwig. "They were soaked! Thanks to miracle fabrics and materials, many hats maintained their shape. The dresses were definitely clinging after the downpour."

Following the run, pastries, coffee, and juice provided by Full Bloom Baking Company and the SF Frontrunners warmed their post-runway rigors.

Another dryer, but less drag-designed, running event, the Bay Area Distance Runners' annual half marathon, takes place May 11 (which is also Mother's Day; start card shopping now).

Register now. Get all the info at the BADR Web site at www.sfbadr.com. Links to that and lots of running events are also at www.sffrontrunners.org.

Men in tights

Last month, several members of the Golden Gate Wrestling Club helped organize the annual Far Western Tournament at San Francisco State University.

They also competed. Johnny Almony and David Dodson held their own against the perennial champ Ron Hughes of San Jose, who this year not only won the Veterans, but also came in second in the open division.

Dave Dodson: bronze medal —

Open Division Freestyle 145-162 lbs. and bronze medal — Open Division Greco.

Johnny Almony: gold medal — Open Division Freestyle 145-162 lbs. and silver medal — Open Division Greco.

Si Durney: silver medal — Open Division Freestyle 163-174 lbs. Congratulations to these stalwart grapplers. On April 5, Almony, Dodson, and others also competed in Sebastopol at the Analy High School tournament. Yep. Analy. I double-checked it.

Don't miss their SF Eagle Tavern beverage benefit on Sunday, May 18, from 3-6 p.m. Wrestlers and beer, always an amusing combination.

Golden Gate will host the 18th annual Memorial Day weekend Freestyle Wrestling Tournament May 23-26 at Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood Street and 18th Street. Grapplers from Los Angeles, New York, San Diego, and other cities regularly attend what's become for many the perfect excuse not to pack up the picnic gear and join the droves of commuters leaving town.

Info, links, and other stuff at www.ggwc.org. Take a gander at the new singlets and T-shirts for sale.

Soccer 2u

This just in: Not only is San Francisco hosting the annual IGLA swim meet this year, but the San Francisco Spikes will host the annual IGLA World Cup Tournament in 2004.

Info: www.sfs spikes.com or call (415) 357-6121. ▼

My one-man competition in the journalist quinquagintathlon continues at www.sportscomplex.org.

being sold during the day for travel and other prizes, and James C. Hormel, the country's first openly gay ambassador and major donor to gay causes, will match all raffle proceeds.

Another sponsor of the event, Asia-SF, is also hosting "Club A-List" the night of the event. Anyone dining out that day is invited to stop by the South of Market restaurant's downstairs nightclub from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Admission is free and the restaurant will be offering drink specials and raffling off prizes. Popular Aphrodite will be auctioning off eligible bachelors with the proceeds going toward Stop AIDS' HIV prevention programs.

For more information, call (415) 575-0160, ext. 274. ▼

LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE 0265290-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Fresh Catch 24 Willie Mays Plaza San Francisco, CA 94107. This business is conducted by an individual signed David Michael Collins. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/13/2003.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540643

In the Matter of the Application of Jamey Holly Rogers Jacobus For change of Name. The application of Jamey Holly Rogers Jacobus for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Jamey Holly Rogers Jacobus has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Jamey Jacobus Moore. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 20th day of May at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540644

In the Matter of the Application of Carole Ann Renselaer For change of Name. The application of Carole Ann Renselaer for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Carole Ann Renselaer has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Carole Renselaer Moore. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 20th day of May at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265399-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Golden Shears 4974 Mission St. San Francisco, CA 94112. This business is conducted by an individual signed Rosa R. Metcalfe. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/19/2003.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540639

In the Matter of the Application of Kirsten Maria Konigsmark For change of Name. The application of Kirsten Maria Konigsmark for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Kirsten Maria Konigsmark has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Kirsten Maria Riccardi. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 19th day of May at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540621

In the Matter of the Application of Elizabeth Nicoloff Baum For change of Name. The application of Elizabeth Nicoloff Baum for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Elizabeth Nicoloff Baum has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Elizabeth Nicoloff Barrett. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 05th day of May at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

MAR. 27, APR. 3, 10, 17, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265623-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Constable Antique Lighting 366 Tenth Street San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual signed Todd Alan. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on March 26, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/26/2003.

APR. 3, 10, 17, 24, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265618-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Muang Thai Thai Cuisine, 385 Taylor Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. This business is conducted by an individual signed Woncharum Aksonboon. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/26/2003.

APR. 3, 10, 17, 24, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540659

In the Matter of the Application of Julito McStay Ong For change of Name. The application of Julito McStay Ong for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Julito McStay Ong has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Julito Jules McStay Ong. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 02nd day of June at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

APR. 3, 10, 17, 24, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265862-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Search Light Solutions, 684 A Sanchez Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual signed Andrew P. Zaiman. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on April 01, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 04/04/2003.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265676-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Dauntless Promotion, 659 Scott Street #10, San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is conducted by an individual signed Jennifer Dault. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on March 28, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/28/2003.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265692-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Motel Brazil Imports, 404 Broderick Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is conducted by an individual signed Andrew M. Della Rocca. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on March 28, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 03/28/2003.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS OR CITATION

CASE NUMBER: FDI-03-752745

Notice to respondent Wendy Marie Huffman. You are being sued. Petitioner's name is: Christopher Darby Huffman. You have 30 Calendar Days after this Summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response (form 1282) at the court and have a copy served on the petitioner. A letter or phone call will not protect you. If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form. If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately. Notice: The restraining orders on the back are effective against both husband and wife until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. These orders are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them. The name and address of the court is: San Francisco Superior Court 400 McAllister Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94102.

APRIL 17, 24, MAY, 01, 08, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC CNC-03-540666

In the Matter of the Application of Robin Alison Gilmore For change of Name. The application of Robin Alison Gilmore for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Robin Alison Gilmore has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Mikal Robin Gilmore. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 16 day of June at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

BAY AREA REPORTER CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC-03-540664

In the Matter of the Application of Jo Lil Howard For change of Name. The application of Jo Lil Howard for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Jo Lil Howard has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Josephine Lillian Howard. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 02 day of June at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE NO. CNC-03540673

In the Matter of the Application of D'Aarez Zeru O.C. Loggins For change of Name. The application of D'Aarez Zeru O.C. Loggins for change of name, having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that D'Aarez Zeru O.C. Loggins has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to D'Aarez Zeru O.C. Woodard. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered and directed, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 5th day of June at 9:00am, of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265865-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: The UPS Store 660 4th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94107. This business is conducted by a general partnership signed Joseph M. Corpion and Stephen Portaro. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 04/04/2003.

APR. 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0266088-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Paul Ave Hand Car Wash, 49 Paul Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94124. This business is conducted by an individual signed Scott D. Roberts. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on April 14, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 04/14/2003.

APR. 17, 24, MAY 1, 8, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0266048-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Law And Mediation Solutions, 83 Scotia Avenue, San Francisco, Ca. 94124. This business is conducted by an individual signed Joel K. Rubinstein. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on March 01, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 04/11/2003.

APR. 17, 24, MAY 1, 8, 2003

STATEMENT FILE 0265914-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Island Treasures, 559 John Muir Dr. #B412 San Francisco, Ca. 94132. This business is conducted by an individual signed Rodolfo C. Soriano. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on April 8, 2003. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 04/08/2003.

APR. 17, 24, MAY 1, 8, 2003

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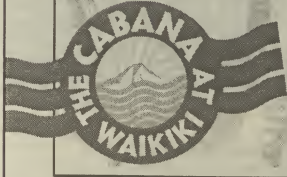
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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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Fun, music, nature tours and information booths on environmental issues will be a part of the People's Earth Day Fair on Saturday, April 26 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Heron's Head Park at Jennings and Cargo. Sponsored by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission along with community groups, this fun-filled, free event will include activities for the entire family. For more information, call 508-0575.

VACANCY NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 54974, California Government Code, notice is hereby given of the following unscheduled vacancies. Interested persons may obtain an application form from the Clerk of the Rules Committee, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA 94102-4689. Completed applications should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board. All applicants must be residents of San Francisco, unless otherwise stated. Additional information and an application may be obtained by accessing the City's web site: www.sfgov.org/bdsupvrs

Please Note: Depending upon the posting date, some vacancies may have already been filled. To determine if vacancies for this Board/Committee/Commission or Task Force are still available please call the Rules Committee Clerk at 554-5184.

Asthma Task Force - File No. 030606

The Asthma Task Force consists of a total of thirty (30) members (twenty voting, ten non-voting), 22 of whom are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Twenty (20) of the twenty-two members appointed by the Board of Supervisors are voting members; two (2) are non-voting members.

The purposes of the Task Force is to recommend to the Board of Supervisors legislative action and citywide strategies that would ensure the highest standard of asthma management and prevention services for all residents in the City and County of San Francisco, and to provide general advice and assistance to the Board of Supervisors with regard to funding priorities, legislative action, and city policies for the prevention and management of asthma in the City and County of San Francisco.

Term of Office: Voting members of the Asthma Task Force shall be appointed for a term of two years. In the event a vacancy occurs, the Board of Supervisors shall appoint a successor to complete the remainder of that term.

Compensation: Members shall serve without compensation or reimbursement for expenses.

Vacant seat, new position, seat 12, must be a representative of MediCal Managed Care Insurers and is a voting member, for the unexpired portion of a two year term ending June 30, 2003.

Vacant seat, new position, seat 21, must be an individual who represents property interests (non-voting member), for the unexpired portion of a two year term ending June 30, 2003.

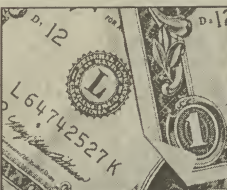
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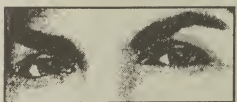
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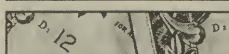
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Mahler's Symphony No. 3 — twice!
Pierre Boulez and Michael Tilson
Thomas each do grand renderings.
page 32

Legs don't fail him
Greg Walloch puts the
ooh-la-la in disability.
page 26



Cabaret with class
Polly Bergen cancels,
but Lillias White sings on.
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 33 • No. 16 • 17 April 2003

Our picks for the 46th SF International Film Fest — Week 1

Wars, gangs & naughty French boys

by David Lamble

Marooned in Iraq — A film that fleshes out today's headlines from the poetic director of *A Time for Drunken Horses*. Kurdish filmmaker Bahman Ghobadi carves his second feature around the comic/tragic misadventures of a Don Quixote like elderly musician and his two Sancho Panza like sons. On a journey to find his ex-wife (right after the first Gulf War) that takes him through the beautifully and perilously war ravaged countryside of Kurdistan, starting in Iran and crossing the border into Iraq as Saddam's war planes drop chemical bombs on fleeing refugees. Ghobadi has a special knack with nonprofessional actors, especially children on the cusp of puberty. A slapstick beginning introduces us to characters who will break our hearts. A nice dialogue on the evolving relationship of men and women in the last bastion of resistance to feminism and a modern view of what it means to be fully human. (KAB 4-20/PFA 4-25)

Clément



group of observant young filmmakers including Carlos Cuarón (*Y Tu Mama También*) and Guillermo Arriaga (screenwriter for *Amores Perros*). A young woman's wish for a new look gets hilarious fulfillment, a flower pot proves a pesky nemesis, a young girl gets an eyeful of adult relationships — these are the highlights of this funny and often moving program, a revealing slice of new talent from North America's most happening film scene. (KAB 4-19/CORT 4-30)

Clément — The kind of filmmaking at which French have no peers, a candid examination of an erotic side of life that is alluring. (KAB 4-19/CORT 4-30)
page 28 ►

Cortos Mexicanos — A wry collection of contemporary Mexican shorts by a smart



Marooned
in Iraq

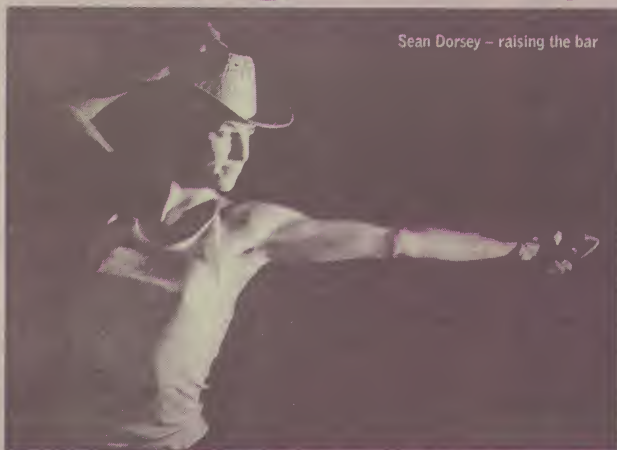


Cortos
Mexicanos

Sean Dorsey pushes the boundaries at the ODC Theater

Sassy genderqueer dance

by Zak Szymanski



Sean Dorsey — raising the bar

Fagot cruising, the butch-femme dynamic, and the notion of living in a genderless skin are all about to hit the stage in ways not yet seen, even in San Francisco.

"Migrations," new dances from San Francisco's most promising choreographers, part of ODC Theater's pilot program for emerging artists, runs this Friday and Saturday, April 25 and 26, at ODC's Mission District venue at 3153 17th St.

The program highlights Amy Seiwert, who as a female choreographer is making ballet history, with her work touted as classical language with an awareness "of its potential absurdity." It also features modern dancer and choreographer Sean Dorsey, whose Fresh Meat Productions last year at ODC Theater put on an intricately queer variety show that raised the bar for future LGBT performances.

Founded in 1976, ODC Theater is one of the oldest contemporary dance organizations in the city, consistently pushing the

envelope and imploding the forms of performance. Still, it's a significant occurrence that one of ODC's featured choreographers is a self-identified genderqueer/trans whose pieces challenge the very instrument upon which dancers depend.

"Mostly I feel blessed and honored to be one of the only genderqueer/trans voices in modern dance," Dorsey says. "Blessed because I have the confidence and opportunity to tell my story from the vantage point of this body. Honored because I recognize the power of artists as culture-shapers, visionaries, revolutionaries. On a good day, I can muster up the motivation to go forward boldly, fiercely and do what no one else is doing."

Dorsey himself has been carving out new space for queer bodies in modern dance for years, with his work shown at Dance Mission, the Lesbian and Gay Dance Festival, Jon Sims Center for the Art, the SF LGBT Community Center, and at LadyFest

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SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

Thriving on difference

Greg Walloch in 'White Disabled Talent' at NCTC

by Richard Dodds

As a kid on crutches, Greg Walloch noticed at an early age that he got more stares than his friends. "Instead of feeling upset by that, I realized it was kind of powerful," he said. "I figured as long as I got people's attention I might as well say something interesting."

More than 20 years later, Walloch still uses crutches, still gets people's attention, and still has something interesting to say. But these days, he says it from the stage. *White Disabled Talent* is the title of Walloch's signature one-man show, opening April 19 at New Conservatory Theatre Center.

Walloch, 32, was born with cerebral palsy, a non-degenerative condition that, in his case, affects his legs. Growing up in Southern California, he was just 16 when he discovered Highways, the landmark performance space that had him interacting with such free-thinking notables as Tim Miller, Holly Hughes, and John Fleck.

"Tim Miller was one of the first people to urge me to write

some solo work and put my voice out there," Walloch said in a phone interview. That voice eventually spoke not only to his personal experiences with a disability, but also as a gay man with a disability.

"Sometimes people hang this saintly thing on disabled people, and I'm not so interested in portraying that," Walloch said. "No matter what we've got going on on the outside, deep down we've all got these messy edges. They're ugly and beautiful and all the stuff, and so I'm more interested in putting forward the whole package."

Walloch performed an early version of *White Disabled Talent* a decade ago. "It's a constantly evolving piece because it's very conversational," he said. "I've done some other solo work, but this seems to be a show that really resonates with people." (The show was also the centerpiece of the documentary *Keeping It Real*, which has been retitled *F**K the Disabled* for its video release.)

The stage-show title comes from the time he was at auditions for *Sesame Street*. Walloch was waiting his turn when he heard a casting director call out, "Send in the white disabled talent." He lost the part but gained a catchphrase.

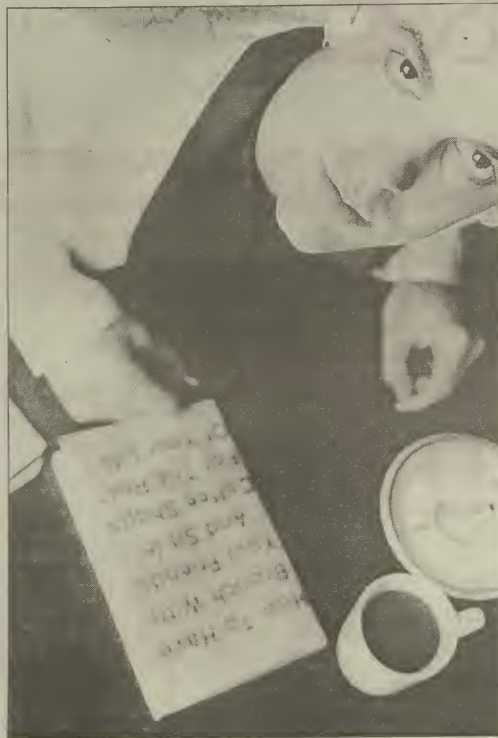
Onstage, Walloch sometimes says things that other disabled people would rather not hear spoken in mixed company. "You're not supposed to show the places where we're vulnerable, not show the places where we don't have it all figured out," he said. "But I think that's shifting now."

Walloch also talks about being disabled in body-conscious gay society. "I think a lot of people just don't see disabled people as sexual," he said, "so it's interesting to play with that idea."

He turned down a request from *Unzipped* to pose nude, but he did doff his shirt for several shots in the magazine (available



Backstage



Playwright/actor Greg Walloch says things other disabled people won't.

for viewing at www.gregwalloch.com). "Someone said, 'Isn't it great that a gay magazine is featuring someone like Greg Walloch?' And someone else said, 'Yeah, but he's a disabled person who could be on *Dawson's Creek*, so it's not really like they're being that diverse.' That's a little bitchy because I don't think I'm mister super model guy."

Part of Walloch wants to be seen as just-folks, but there is another part that thrives on his differences. "When I'm walking along with my friends in New York, I get approached at least once a day by a stranger who will

ask me about my physical situation. My friends go, 'Greg, you're so gracious. That would drive me insane.' But I think people's hearts are in the right place most of the time. Being a little bit physically different has been this great lightning rod for unique experiences."

For more information on *White Disabled Talent*, call 861-8972.

Making an Impact

If John Fisher isn't busy enough in his new job running Theatre Rhino, he is stepping out to direct his latest play for Impact Theatre. The Impact production of *Queer Theory* opens April 18 at the Exit Theatre.

Fisher, whose freewheeling works range from *Medea - the Musical* to *Amnesia*, said he set out to write a more traditional play this time around. "I tried to write a play that maybe somebody else could do in another city because I keep writing these things,

and people read them and go, 'What the hell's going on here?' So it's a little more normal."

Queer Theory is a comedy about a professor whose theories on Elizabethan gender fluidity come crashing into his own world. "It's all about Renaissance gender, but actually it's not. That's just how it starts off. But I can't tell you more than that." Except that notable gender-bending actor Matthew Martin is featured in the cast.

For ticket info, call (510) 464-4468.

'Finches' in flight

Claire Chafee's *Why We Have a Body* has received scores of productions since its debut at the Magic Theatre in 1993. It's also become required reading on many campuses. So interest is high whenever this SF lesbian playwright unveils a new work.

Encore Theatre Company is presenting the world premiere of Chafee's *Darwin's Finches*, opening April 19 at the Thick House. Described as "a romantic comedy for the depressed," the new play looks at adult sibling rivalry and the road to forgiveness.

Amy Resnik and Warren David Keith head the cast directed by Lisa Steindler, Encore's artistic director. Past Encore productions include Leigh Fondakowski's *I Think I Like Girls* and Adam Bock's *Five Flights*.

For more information on Encore's current show, call 821-4849.

Short scenes

Shotgun Players is presenting late gay playwright Harry Kondoleon's *The Vampires*. The dark comedy about family skeletons runs through May 11 at La Val's Subterranean in Berkeley. Call (510) 704-8210.

Such notable local gay playwrights as John Fisher, Prince Gomolivas, and Garret Jon Groenewald will have works presented as staged readings at PlayGround's annual awards night and benefit on April 21 at A Traveling Jewish Theatre. Tickets are \$35; call 704-3177.

Kathryn Crosby heads the cast of *Roberta*, opening April 25 at the Eureka Theatre. 42nd Street Moon is presenting the 1933 Harbach-Kern musical as a staged concert. The Saturday Night Out performance and reception for LGBT audiences are on April 26. Call 978-2787. ▼

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Impact Theatre presents John Fisher's *Queer Theory* at Exit Theatre.

BOOKS & THEATRE

Hard candy

by Jim Nawrocki

Pulling Taffy by Matt Bernstein Sycamore; Suspect Thoughts Press, \$16.95

When Beat legend Jack Kerouac was writing his famous 1957 novel *On the Road*, he did so using a large roll of cheap paper that allowed him, hyped up on speed, to type manically without having to bother putting in new pages. Reading Matt Bernstein Sycamore's first novel *Pulling Taffy*, one gets the sense that he could have done the same thing. The book reads like one immense soliloquy, as if he'd pulled the whole thing from raw journal entries, or dictated it into a tape-recorder. While Kerouac's novel helped define the restlessness and rootlessness of his generation, Sycamore's seems merely to exemplify the vapidity of the club-drug, party culture of his generation. Maybe that's the point of this book, but it's difficult to tell.

The book begins, in *medias res*, with the main character's first-person description of getting ready to go to an STD clinic with a friend. It's difficult to call this book a novel or a story, because it is not, in the traditional sense, a story. It's more a picaresque account of the adventures of Matt, a gay hustler and drug-user who interacts with a wide array of characters along the way. Although there are chapter and section divisions within this book, they seem almost unnecessary — the transitions of time and place and setting are so abrupt that the book might almost work better as one long unbroken text. It would fit better with the manic quality of the action. At one point, for example, Matt is working out in a gym in New York City. The next minute he's on the beach in Provincetown.

Presumably, this is an autobiographical novel. Matt shares a first name, and a nickname, with the youthful author, and the book is dedicated to a late friend who is also a character in the book. Most of the book is a series of descriptions of Matt's encounters with his clients or his adventures in cruising areas and sex clubs. In this sense, it covers the same ground already explored by Rick Whitaker's 1999 book, *Assuming the Position: A Memoir of Hustling*. But while Whitaker's book is an earnest attempt to come to terms with an admittedly extreme lifestyle, Sycamore's book is merely a description. Again, that might very well be the point of this book, and a memoir is of course much different than a novel, even an autobiographical one. Still, it seems that Sycamore does not take enough advantage of the options available to a novelist.

Trick pony

It should be said that Sycamore writes about sex very well, and his frenzied style usually makes for engaging reading, especially when he's relating the curious mix of tedium and sudden euphoria that can characterize gay cruising. Not surprisingly, portions of the novel previously appeared in erotic anthologies. In addition, Sycamore has edited the book *Tricks and Treats: Sex Workers Write About Their Clients*, and it's fair to assume that his work on that book influenced this novel. He also quotes the erotic work of other authors.

What the book seems to lack, however, is any level of real reflection on the part of Matt, the main character. It's not clear if Sycamore intends this to be the case, or if he simply missed the mark in clearly defining Matt. Sycamore seems to play with the concept, but he never develops Matt's character fully. For example, he reveals early



on that Matt was sexually abused, repeatedly, by his father, and he even includes a scene in which Matt reveals this to a stunned and disbelieving mother, but he never truly develops this storyline in the novel. Similarly, he describes the death of a good friend only, it seems, in passing. The closest that Matt ever comes to anything resembling self-reflection are statements like, "Maybe I need this world of drugs because I don't have anything else."

There are times when Sycamore's prose is almost like Surrealist automatic writing — juxtapositions and images get thrown together, particularly in the short sections that separate the larger sections of the novel. He even engages in weird stream-of-consciousness wordplay ("...all my tricks give me the same look, book, crook — no, listen...") that seems designed to amplify his perpetually wired state of mind. There's plenty of movement in *Pulling Taffy*, but one wonders where it's all going. ▼



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Rhino goes for laughs

by Richard Dodds

Theatre Rhinoceros has just announced a 2003-04 season that is, first and foremost, about entertainment. "What with the economy and wars and all," said co-artistic director John Fisher, "I felt that more than ever we need some entertainment in our gay lives."

The 26th season will open on August 24 with *Sleeping with Straight Men*, Ronnie Larson's comedy-drama based on the notorious "secret admirer" episode of *The Jenny Jones Show*. It was first staged last year as an independent production in Rhino's Studio, and traveled to New York for an off-Broadway run earlier this year. Writer-director Larsen's *Cocksucker: A Love Story* will close out the current season next month.

Jaeson Post's *Worse than Chocolate*, directed by Post and Jeffrey Hartgraves, arrives October 16 with a tale of four San Francisco office workers who go looking for love in various permutations while dealing with comically misguided management at work. "I saw *Worse than Chocolate* when it was workshopped at the Exit Theatre in October, and it was wonderful," Fisher said.

Christmas with the Crawfords, beginning November 20, returns this holiday tradition to San Francisco. Created by Richard Win-

chester, written by Mark Sargent, and directed by Donna Drake, this high-drag comedy with songs imagines a celebrity-studded Christmas party thrown by Joan Crawford at her manic best.

Spray, opening January 15, is New Yorker Mike Albo's one-man show that includes monologues, dance, and rants as Albo focuses a critical eye on contemporary culture. "I saw Mike's show at the Fringe Festival last year," Fisher said, "and it was one of the best one-man shows I've ever seen."

Erika Lopez is adapting her novel *Flaming Iguanas* into a play that will begin performance February 19. This is the story of outlaw lesbian Tomato Rodriguez who sets out on a cross-country sojourn about her motorcycle. Gemma Whelan will direct.

Still to be filled is a final show to open in April 2004. "I want to see where the season's going and what people want," said Fisher of the first season he has assembled since becoming co-artistic director with the departing Doug Holsclaw. ▼

Season subscriptions (\$75-\$150) are now on sale. Theatergoers who purchase a subscription during April will receive a free ticket to the New Year's Eve show starring Marga Gomez and Doug Holsclaw at the Victoria Theatre. Call 861-5079.

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SF Film Festival

◀ Arts cover

ternately trivialized or demonized in most media presentations, director Emmanuelle Bercot examines the implications of a crush a 30 year old woman develops on the 12 year old friend of her godson. In the tradition of Louis Malle's *Muriel on the Hill* and unlike the fake social slapstick of *Tadpole*, Clement will provoke discussions both for its performances and for the judgement-free zone in which true art thrives. The director plays her intrepid protagonist as a kind of recycled teenager. (KAB 4-18 & 20)

Robert Capa: In Love and War

— He fled his native Hungary to avoid Hitler's invasion; was robbed of his American passport during the McCarthy witch hunt;



The Peter Sellers Story ... as he filmed it — kooky personal confessions.

was considered the best war correspondent of his time (from the Spanish Civil War through his un-

timey death at age 40 in Vietnam); his photos of American troops braving German bullets in the D-Day landing served as Spielberg's template for *Private Ryan*; he himself was the daredevil photographer Hitchcock drew on for Jimmy Stewart's wheelchair bound character in *Rear Window*; he almost single-handedly invented the method by which photo-journalists could keep the copyrights on their work and thus their independence from the Luce empire. Courageous and gorgeous Robert Capa was a great lover too — this moving portrait (illustrated by his jarringly personal images of the heroes and victims of war) tells how he lived and died. (KAB 4-18 & 21)

Eat, Sleep, No Women — We next focus on the work of a modern German journalist turned filmmaker to debunk an aspect of



Durval Discos — Who gets custody of the kid in this Brazilian caper?

the myths created by the life of Robert Capa. Heiner Stadler's documentary uses a very Germanic style of narration to pull together a montage of images and stories illustrating the absurdities of covering war for a living. (PFA 4-21 / KAB 4-23 & 26)

The Good Old Naughty Days —

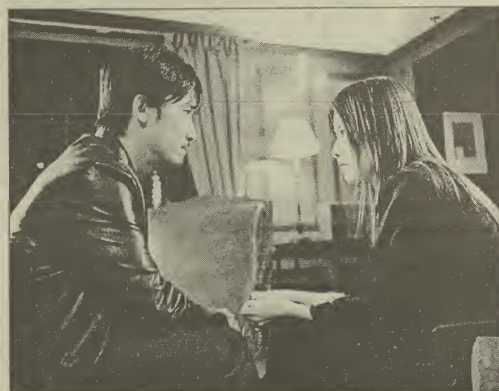
Imagine sepia tinted footage of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence playing all genders in a no holds barred game of naughty French postcards. A special treat for those who pine for the long-gone days in which non-buffed bodies were permitted in pornography. Also since these recovered and restored silent shorts (shot by film pros on the sly) were mostly filmed in France during the roaring twenties, it's interesting to observe the amount of bisexual sex play on display. A special NC-17 like presentation only for festival-goers 18 and older. (Castro 4-21)

— Sellers' unrequited crush on actress Sophia Loren and his multiple marriages are cast in a stark light by his crooning of a naive little ballad. "Gosh oh gee I'm falling in love and so is she, I haven't told her and she hasn't told me but we know it just the same." On an old *Steve Allen Show*, Sellers discloses the model for his Dr. Strangelove voice, and no, it wasn't Henry Kissinger. (KAB 4-19/Castro 4-23)

Durval Discos — What begins as a well shot and comically acted Brazilian version of *High Fidelity* turns slightly surreal as a son and mother duel over the custody of a five-year-old child left in their care by a mysterious housekeeper. Director Anna Muylaert gives us a soundtrack filled with '70s Brazilpop. (KAB 4-19 & 22)

Winged Migration — I can't resist it: The Birds are back. Documentary director Jacques Perrin indulges his curiosity about the migratory habits of the planet's winged creatures to provide a truly unique 81 minutes of high tech cinema. (Castro 4-19/KAB 4-21)

Infernal Affairs — Don't fret if you haven't the foggiest idea of what's going down in the first 45 minutes of this stylish Hong Kong-based thriller. Two rival gangs are battling for control of a big drug deal; one of the gangs happens to be the Metropolitan Police, but you can be excused for not knowing this. Directors Andrew Lau and Alan Mak tell their story through the rivalries of two pretty boy heroes: Tony Leung (*Happy Together*) is an undercover cop embedded in a drug gang whose identity is known only to his police boss; Andy Lau (*Full-time Killer*) is officially a cop but actually a gang member planted in the force by his Goldfinger-like crime boss Sam (Eric Tsang). Tension mounts and the ending will surprise. (PFA 4-18/Castro 4-21/KAB 4-25) ▼



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FILM

Robert Altman, in his own words

Director to be honored at SF film festival

by David Lamble

This year, the San Francisco Film Society presents its Lifetime Achievement Award in Directing to Robert Altman, who'll be on hand at the Castro Theatre for a free-flowing discussion of one of filmdom's bumpiest rides, with critic David Thomson, followed by a screening of *Nashville*.

Twenty years ago, I was privileged to sit in a San Francisco hotel room for 90 minutes with a tape recorder as Robert Altman ruminated over what was at that moment, July 5, 1984, the ruins of his career. He could be cutting: dishing film mogul Barry Diller, who was watching his films while on the phone; brutal: dismissing the Reagan Presidency with a curt comment about the death of the Marines in Lebanon; or unexpectedly generous: praising Spielberg and Lucas, the terrible twins whose megaplex-mall hits help end Altman's reign.

Altman had been on an incredible winning streak: eight films over nine years — *M*A*S*H*, *Brewster McCloud*, *McCabe & Mrs. Miller*, *Images*, *The Long Goodbye*, *Thieves Like Us*, *California Split*, *Nashville* and *3 Women* — stumbling only once, *Buffalo Bill and the Indians*, or *Sitting Bull's History Lesson*. Altman's major career bomb. To see these films in a theatre is to experience again virtually everything that was vital, messy and truthful about American film in the '70s.

After *3 Women* (Castro, 4/20, 2:15 p.m.) in 1977, it all stopped abruptly. The master kept making films, but the fans (particularly after *Popeye*) stopped caring, stopped going. In 1982 came the first of the comebacks. Unable to finance a real movie, Altman found a unique way to put plays on film. The first effort was the most commercially successful: *Come Back to the Five & Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean* tracks the painful memories and revelations that pour forth at the 20th reunion of a James Dean fan club formed in a small Texas town, near to where he was shooting *Giant*. With bell-ringing performances from Sandy Dennis, Karen Black and Kathy Bates, and

an awesome screen return by Cher, Altman was back, briefly, on his own terms. (Castro, 4/22, 3:30 p.m.)

Streamers followed in 1983, clearly the best thing Altman had done since *3 Women*, a claustrophobic, painful pressure-cooker of a film (from David Rabe's play) about six men trapped in an military barracks at the start of Vietnam. Still taught in gay film classes around the country, *Streamers* frames the issues of the day against the backdrop of a very sexual confrontation between two soldiers, neither of whom should have been serving in this man's army. You can't look, you can't look away.

Dishing with Nixon

With *Secret Honor*, Altman employed a University of Michigan student crew to capture a climb-the-walls performance from Philip Baker Hall, as Richard Nixon roaming the White House, Chivas Regal in hand, dishing Castro, Kennedy, Alger Hiss and Henry K.

"I've really taken the play as it exists and filmed it," Altman said. "But I didn't film it on the stage. The only thing missing in *Jimmy Dean*, *Streamers* or *Secret Honor* is that we didn't have another screenplay. We took the text of the play itself and said, 'Okay, this is our screenplay, this is our film.' And we set out to make a film out of that. And that's why it doesn't look stagy, and yet it's the same content."

"In all three of these films, being in one location is a very important part of the play itself. It makes the play work. If I took *Jimmy Dean* into a Texas town and showed the whole workings of the town, it would be a terrible soap opera."

"*Streamers*, if you took it out of the confinement of the barracks, you've released the pressure on those characters, because that's what they were in, and it was important to stay in there. If I'd cut away to documentary footage of Nixon or made a mixed bag out of *Secret Honor*, it would become one of these pseudo-documentaries that is just propaganda."

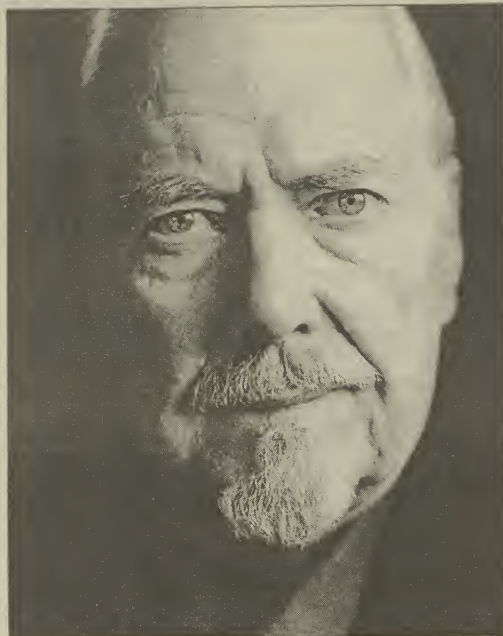
"In *Secret Honor*, we do take a point of view. I don't consider it propaganda, I think it is a dra-

matic presentation of the psyche of a man that we do know a lot about. It's not really about Nixon, we're using Nixon to talk about the Presidency itself."

"I think everybody kinds of knows that thing of locking yourself in your own private world. It's like going inside your own mind, in your own apartment, or office. When Nixon sits there and gets drunk and talks into the tape-recorder, talks to the portraits on the wall, and rambles back and forth through this, really struggling with these demons, it is Shakespearean."

"It was not important in *Nashville* for the actors to know what the other actors were doing, if they didn't have direct contact with them. I was looking for truth to come out of these actors playing these characters, that I could suddenly recognize rather than having a written truth. The screenplay of *Nashville* was a blueprint. What we really did in *Nashville* was to create an event, document it, and film it."

"Barbara Baxley did a thing with Geraldine Chaplin in one of the sequences where Karen Black is singing. She talked about the Kennedy brothers and their assassinations and the effect it had on her, while Karen is singing. That went on for 20 minutes. I told Barbara she's got two rolls of film, tell me whatever you feel. I shot 20 minutes of film, and I excised



Director Robert Altman: searching for truth in essences.

from that in the film probably 35 seconds, but it was necessary to get that full story in order to be able to pull out that little piece of essence, because you've got the

feelings from what was in her eyes and in the catches in her voice, and in her face, not so much from the content of what she said." (Castro, 4/22, 7:30 p.m.) ▼

MUSIC

The Faint come to SF



Who knew that Omaha, Nebraska could produce a band as cool as The Faint? Upon first listen, you'll think this is some long, lost, goth-damaged band from the '80s, with their danceable beats, churning electro sounds, and affected vocals. But unlike most groups in the new-electro scene, The Faint started out as a traditional rock band, before they began experimenting with keyboards and drum machines. The end result is a dark, danceable, electro-sounding band that actually knows how to rock out on stage. The Faint play this Friday, April 18, at The Fillmore, 1805 Geary Blvd. Tickets are \$17.50. For more info, call 346-6000.

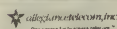


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Get well, Polly

A pity we can't hear Bergen sing

by Richard Dodds

Polly Bergen said she was "just a little tired" when she came to the phone for an interview. The 72-year-old singer had just come back from 11 days on the road and was resting up before setting out for a three-week run at the Plush Room in San Francisco. Unfortunately, just a few days later, Bergen was in the hospital with pneumonia, rendering her SF engagement canceled.

But the story behind Bergen's life and career are filled with so many intriguing facets that they are worth recounting, even if Bergen is no longer San Francisco-bound at this moment.

Bergen was supposed to be on total vocal rest but that proved no deterrent during the interview. For nearly an hour, the singer needed little prodding to talk expansively about her reborn career and the amazing life that provides her full authority to sing "I'm Still Here."

"I've lived that song," Bergen said of Stephen Sondheim's anthem of highs and lows and, most of all, survival. She has lived to some extent all the songs that she performs since resuming a singing career after a 30-year hiatus.

"The material has to be something that resonates for me as a human being," Bergen said of her song choices, "something that allows me to reveal a part of my life

and the emotional journey I've taken. If an audience really wants to pay attention, they'll hear my life story in song to a very large extent."

Bergen first learned "I'm Still Here" for her well-reviewed performance in the 2001 Broadway revival of *Follies*. She was supposed to come to San Francisco soon thereafter, but opted to join the cast of the long-running revival of *Cabaret*. "I could not turn down playing Fraulein Schneider," she said, and the Kander and Ebb score added "So What?" to Bergen's cabaret repertoire.

"I've lived that song, too," Bergen said, and if it seems she is claiming an oversized share of life, consider these facts that Bergen unhesitatingly acknowledges and usually brings up:

She was born on a kitchen table in Concord, Tenn., and at age 15 was in Los Angeles making her own way as a performer. At 17, she had an illegal abortion that left her sterile. A few years later, she was making hit records, and appearing weekly on the original *To Tell the Truth*. At 27, she won an Emmy for starring in *The Helen Morgan Story* and had her own weekly primetime series on NBC. Then came the second act, three adopted children (two straight, one gay), a 20-year marriage to the high-rolling agent/producer Freddie Fields that ended painfully, and a later husband who managed to lose \$9 million of their

money. And now the third act.

"I think it feels better than ever," Bergen said of the renewed recognition. "But it felt pretty damn wonderful when I did it before."

She recalled how her career took an amazing leap after she played tragic torch singer Helen Morgan on television. "I was kind of a middle-of-the-road singer, next to closing act or the starring act in second-rate hotels. After I played Helen Morgan, in one night I went from being a \$5,000 a week singer to a \$50,000 singer."

It took a while for her self-esteem to catch up with her salary. "You think they're going to discover that you're a fake because you haven't changed, so why are they all lining up? I don't feel that way now. I really do feel when I walk out on a stage I have something unique to offer."

Bergen called her earlier self a "super achiever" that led to disappointment when everything didn't come out perfectly. "There is still a part of me that I have to really fight," she said. "It's that horrific desire to be perfect. I have very close to a perfect ear so if I even start to hit a note that is not on the money, I go berserk inside. That's a lot of pressure to put on yourself."

That ol' devil nicotine

That pressure contributed to a 50-year addiction to cigarettes

next page ►



A canceled Plush Room gig doesn't mean Polly Bergen isn't still magic.

Party's not over

Singer Polly Bergen on CD

by Tavo Amador

Polly Bergen's welcome return to the world of cabaret — delayed though it may be due to illness — warrants a look at her commercial recordings, some of which are available on compact discs. Born in 1930, she first made an impact in the '50s, and stood out from the other talented and popular girl singers of the era: Rosemary Clooney, Patti Page, Gale Storm, Dinah Washington, Teresa Brewer, and '40s holdovers like Doris Day, Ella Fitzgerald, and Sarah Vaughn.

Bergen had a lovely, sultry, powerful mezzo voice, bigger than those of Peggy Lee and Julie London, her only contemporary rivals for sexy singing. In 1957, she won an Emmy for playing '20s chanteuse Helen Morgan on television, and released a Columbia recording of the soundtrack, *Bergen Sings Morgan*. That album has been paired with another from 1957, *The Party's Over*, and reissued as a compact disc by Sony's Collectables label.

Bergen doesn't imitate Morgan while singing songs she made famous. Rather, she captures the material's emotional core. Many are classic female doormat numbers that could easily result in bathos. Not, however, in Bergen's renditions. She infuses them with an almost French fatalism, an honest assessment of feelings beyond her control. She sings like a woman who knows she's making a mistake, can't stop herself, and asks no pity. This is especially true of Morgan's signature song, "Can't Help Lovin' That Man," from the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein *Showboat*, in which she starred on Broadway. Bergen sings it with a rueful touch that is all the more haunting. She brings that same spirit and warmth to "Mean to Me," "Here Am I, Broken Hearted," and another Kern/Hammerstein classic, "Don't Ever Leave Me."

Reality knocks

"The Party's Over" was the theme song from Bergen's television show, and was written by Julie Styne, Betty Comden, and Adolph Green for Judy Holliday to sing in *Bells Are Ringing*. Bergen makes it



her own. Here again, her deep voice and superb phrasing convey a woman who is reluctantly but candidly facing a disappointing reality. She handles the lovely Kern-Otto Harbach "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes," from *Roberta*, with equal sensitivity, turning it into a coming-of-age ballad, a shedding of romantic naiveté. Her rendition of the witty Howard Dietz/Arthur Schwartz tune, "I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plan," is appropriately light-hearted. She's been disappointed in love before and will get over it. She breaks the listener's heart with Cole Porter's "Every Time We Say Good-Bye," and is totally believable insisting "I'm Through with Love." She also sings less familiar material, like "Where's That Boy I Saved for a Rainy Day," with aplomb.

Bergen was more than a singer, making several films in the '50s and '60s, including the original *Cape Fear* (1961), *Move Over, Darling* (1963), as a patient in a mental hospital where Joan Crawford was Head Nurse in *The Caretakers* (1963), and playing America's first woman chief executive in *Kisses For My President* (1964). She worked steadily on television, notably opposite Robert Mitchum in the miniseries based on Herman Wouk's *Winds of War* (1983) and *War and Remembrance* (1988-89). She also launched various successful commercial enterprises, including a line of women's shoes and cosmetics.

A couple of seasons ago, she appeared on Broadway in a Tony-nominated performance in a revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Follies*, stopping the show with her rendition of "I'm Still Here."

And she is, which is wonderful news for audiences wishing her a full and speedy recovery. ▼

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CABARET

Chantoozy

Lillias White at The Plush Room

By Robert Julian

In a lifetime of cabaret performances, I don't recall a single vocalist who suggested the tempo she wanted by asking her accompanist to keep pace with the undulations of her bouncing bosom. But opening night at The Plush Room, the bodacious Lillias White did just that to pianist Mike Greensill, much to the delight of her audience. It was just one of many moments that demonstrated how the power of this particular vocalist is directly related to her ability to break down the traditional "fourth wall" that separates the performer from the audience.

White's vocal style is of the same school as Jennifer Holliday and Stephanie Mills, actresses who created the original roles in *Dreamgirls* and *The Wiz* that White would subsequently assume. White's two opening numbers, a medley of "Blue Moon"/"Old Devil Moon," and "Ooh, What You Said" were competently presented, but it took White's rendition of "When You Think of Me" to establish the singer's potential. On the latter number, White demonstrated her wonderful range and power, and a sensational ability for scatting. White has the kind of voice that can growl its way through the lower registers or climb into the stratosphere and reach the last row of the top balcony. Her rendition of the Anita Baker hit, "Fairy Tales," emphasized the drama of the lyrics while White's diction actually made the song understandable — something the beautifully melodic Baker rarely accomplishes.

As the evening progressed, White became more relaxed and informal, drawing the audience



For Lillias White, the show definitely goes on — with fab style!

into her performance with a nice balance of stage patter and soulful singing. She concluded the evening with a medley of the songs that took her from her childhood home in Brooklyn to the Broadway stage. This included songs from *Dreamgirls*, *Barnum*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, and *The Life* (which garnered a 1997 Tony Award for White).

Lillias White is a charming stage performer with perfect pitch and amazing range. The timing and execution of her show does

not generate the kind of steam-roller momentum that brings an audience to its feet with wild applause. White is certainly capable of generating this sort of response, but her relaxed, informal demeanor makes the audience feel as if they're hanging out with an old friend. And that can be an equally rewarding experience. ▼

Lillias White appears at the Plush Room through Sunday, April 19. Reservations: (415) 885-2800.

Polly Bergen

◀ previous page

that averaged three to five packs a day. When smoking threatened her singing voice, she gave up singing and stuck with the cigarettes.

"I wouldn't trade my life for anything, and I think that's the reason I didn't quit smoking," Bergen said. "Everyone said it will kill you and I kept saying that I've had the most miraculous life in the world, and if I died tomorrow I could not have any complaints."

Then she discovered that cigarettes were on their way to turning her into an invalid rather than just killing her off in the rush of a moment. "Smoking was going to leave me in a wheelchair unable to breathe," she said. "That's when I got scared."

With smoking behind her, Bergen wanted to try out her pipes again. She joined a concert version of Sondheim's *Company* being done as an AIDS benefit in Miami's trendy South Beach neighborhood: "I thought it was great because I had never heard of South Beach. I'd be able to make a complete ass out of myself because who the hell would see me down there. Then, of course, I arrived down there and every fucking person in the world from New York was down there watching the show."

But she brought down the house with "The Ladies Who



Always a fighter for good causes.

Lunch," and the singing hiatus was soon over. "I'm sitting here with two Broadway shows I'm supposed to listen to," she said of her renewed popularity. "I've already turned down four."

Open . . . but not too open

Bergen worked occasionally as an actress after the singing came to a stop. During those years she also became a high-profile supporter of AIDS services, the Equal Rights Amendment, and abortion rights. She has testified before several state legislatures to stem new restrictions on abortions.

"I was a very good spokeswoman because I could stand up

and say, 'Look, I understand both sides of the issue. I had an abortion when I was 17. It left me sterile. But I would not have a family if two other women had not made the decision to carry their child to term and give them up for adoption.' The government has no right making laws saying who we can go to bed with and how many children we have."

Bergen offered that her son is gay, and had been gay-bashed as a young man. Or as Bergen puts it, "He had the shit beat out of him." She frequently spends time with her son and his partner, and was thrown only briefly when he began shaving his head and covering himself with tattoos. But her openness turned out to have a limit.

"He started getting really graphic about his sex life, and I said to him, 'You know, Peter, I forgot to tell you that I had this guy over last night who I fucked...' And he said, 'Mother!' I said, 'OK, I won't talk to you if you don't talk to me about the bedroom. I can rent a porno film if I want to see what's going on.'"

She's no fuddy-duddy, insisted this hip grandma. "I'm really au courant with what's happening," Bergen said. "I just don't look like I am." ▼

Here's to a speedy recovery for this remarkable lady and to the chance to finally hear her sing in San Francisco.

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Mahlerian bliss

Boulez & the Vienna Philharmonic

Tim Pfaff

Pierre Boulez's arresting new recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 3 (DG) erases any remaining doubt that he is among the greatest Mahlerians of our time. (Before going a sentence further, I need to say that I have not yet heard MTT's new one, which presumably is making its way across the Pacific to me as I write — and that I count MTT among the great living Mahlerians.) I believe that this is the first time that I have written about this symphony without repeating the word "unwieldy," which is reflexively applied to it. With Boulez wielding the baton, over the Vienna Philharmonic at that, it is any-thing but.

It was a given that Boulez — like Mahler himself, a composer first and conductor second (despite recent evidence to the contrary) — would perceive this admittedly

sprawling work as an integrated whole, viewing it from his customary Olympian perspective. But the wonder is the specificity he finds in each of the work's six startlingly different movements. This time around, it's the angels that are in the details (as well as in the vocal-choral fifth movement).

The oft-used analogy of looking at an old painting from which both grime and subsequent overlays have been meticulously scrubbed has seldom seemed as apt as here, where a wealth of instrumental and architectural details emerge with often shocking freshness, yet with all their customary power. The tireless vigilance with which Boulez plumbs this gargantuan score seems almost superhuman. It has long been Boulez's gift — some say the hobbyhorse he narcissistically rides — to find the forward-looking aspects of virtually any score he conducts. Without resorting to any kinkiness of interpretation, he

does nothing to shield the listener from the profound strangeness of this symphony, which Mahler composed in a kind of fit unusual even for him. The nature music is all here, in its usual vividness, as are the mystical views of that nature. But Boulez calls attention to the highly unusual instrumentation (by which I mean more by far than the posthorn of the third movement, which makes a comparatively typical appearance here). Hardly more than a few measure pass before listeners who know the score well shudder again at a sonority previously unheard, or unarticulated in this way. The winds — brass and woodwinds — that are so prominent in this work have seldom had their sounds sculpted as distinctively as Boulez does here.

Movements with distinction

Although there are countless such moments, one does provide a singularly good example. In the sublime fourth movement (the alto solo "O Mensch!" from Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra*), the oboe entrance after the singer's question, "What does the deep midnight say?" is one of the most eerie, penetrating, and disturbing



cries I've heard — and no less so on its subsequent appearances. After the no-holds-barred onslaught of his trenchant first movement (33 minutes, 34 seconds), the subsequent minuet — a startling contrast in any performance — is so light in this reading that at first I thought the sound had cut out on my CD player. Every other movement is shaped as distinctively, and Boulez shows that keeping this long work, with its infinite variety, enticing is, cumulatively, more important than one might previously have thought.

The biggest yield is in the final movement, the first of the really great Adagios that, for most Mahler lovers, "are" Mahler. It poses legendary pacing problems that have defeated many a conductor — and, in the process, corrupted our view of the composer. Bernstein's first LPs of the piece was the first Mahler recording I ever owned, making it my benchmark. But wondrous as most of it is, its drawn-out final cadence gives the impression that Mahler had no self-restraint (famously

true of Lennie) and that, formally, this Langsam is the work of an apprentice. (The baton passing from Bernstein to Boulez at the New York Philharmonic in 1971 showed that all the two conductors had in common was being gay.) Boulez lets it be known from the outset that he knows where he's going with the movement, brings it home in a reasonable time (22' 22"), and gives it such a natural build that the big climax, a true sonic temblor, seems entirely earned — neither dramatically overwrought nor emotionally under-realized. It's a model of shaping, flexible (yet somehow intractable) rhythms, and direct (look out; I mean it) heart-to-heart musical communication.

As is true with Boulez's Ninth, I could live the rest of my days with this and no other recording of this symphony. In its own way, Claudio Abbado's recent live recording of the Third, also on DG, is as great, just wholly different in concept and execution. Nietzsche divided artists into two types: Apollonian (ideal, cool, detached) and Dionysian (ecstatic, hot, and under the skin). With this new Mahler Third, Apollonian Boulez reminds us that both are parts of a pantheon. ▼

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Capturing Mahler

SF Symphony presents the Third

by Philip Campbell

Just in time for Passover and Easter, Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony have released the latest installment in their ongoing Mahler cycle. A two-disc set capturing live performances of the Symphony No. 3, with the *Kindertotenlieder* as generous makeweight, is now available on the Symphony's own SFS Media label.

Recorded with Sony Direct Stream Digital technology in the SACD hybrid format, playable in regular CD and SACD stereo and surround formats, the new release is obtainable at retail outlets and on-line at shopsfsymphony.org.

MTT and the SFS won their fifth Grammy Award for the Symphony No. 6 last February, and while the Grammys are usually pretty clueless about classical music, it was gratifying recognition of a remarkable musical venture.

As the recording industry founders in almost every genre, our local crew continue to make bestselling, fabulously mastered discs of complex and demanding music. I guess if you want it done right, you have to do it yourself.

If I have any complaint about the new release, it is that the technology is almost too sophisticated for its own good. The dynamic range of the recording is so wide and lifelike; it is well nigh impossible to find a comfortable volume level. Soft moments are virtually inaudible, and when one adjusts the sound to fit, a loud outburst causes a scramble to placate the neighbors.

After the first three movements, I switched to headphones and started from the beginning. Suddenly, I was back in Davies Hall again, marveling at MTT's under-



standing of Mahler's sound world and the awesome ensemble of the orchestra. Of course, on disc it sounds even better than in person — fluffs have been edited, with only best performances immortalized, and there are no annoying audience coughs or whispers.

This practice (common with live recordings) does lend some sterility to the proceedings, but no one would seriously want to hear the same mistake over and over again, regardless of how passionately appropriate it may have appeared the first time. Tilson Thomas concerts are famously exciting, and the latest offering captures most of the electricity while remaining flawlessly musical.

Monster bash

The long first movement accounts for almost a third of the entire work, and I guarantee this version will have you enraptured from the first cymbal crashes. MTT takes a stately tempo that soon devolves to an atmosphere of mythic storytelling. If Mahler felt "a symphony must be like the world," the Third is a world of gods and monsters.

When the mezzo-soprano soloist, the estimable Michelle DeYoung, finally intones the first lines of Friedrich Nietzsche's Mid-night song from *Also sprach Zarathustra*, the mood slowly

moves from darkness to light. By the time the women of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, the San Francisco Girls Chorus, and Pacific Boychoir join in, the world is full of ecstasy and joy.

Mahler risked mightily by concluding his epic work with an Adagio movement, and he specified that it was "not to be cut off sharply." Tilson Thomas does end rather abruptly, but I suspect this is more obvious on the recording than it was in the concert hall. Regardless, it is a final thrilling effect in an altogether riveting experience. I only wish the engineers had included the audience response in a separately cued track. For those of us lucky enough to have been in attendance, it was an opportunity to release an avalanche of emotion.

Generously and sensibly (in a crowded, competitive market), SFS Media has filled out the second disc with the somberly beautiful song cycle *Kindertotenlieder* (*Songs on the Deaths of Children*). DeYoung has a gorgeously creamy tone, and memories of her striking stage presence add to the success of the recording.

Her reading may lack some of the aching sadness of other famous interpreters, but their anxiety is replaced with a sense of softly stern reflection that works well with the conductor's burnished accompaniment.

Pierre Boulez has just released another new Mahler Third, and Bernstein was unmissable in his day. Jascha Horenstein's legendary pre-technological-advances recording will always make desert island lists as well, but MTT and company are making a majestic Mahler cycle for the new century, and you don't have to be from San Francisco to be mightily impressed. ▼

MUSIC

Queer independent voices sing out

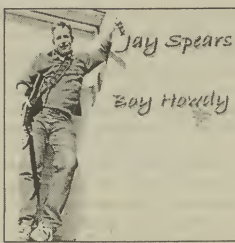
by Jason Serinus

GBT artists continue to impress with high-quality, independently produced discs that run the gamut from lusciously lavender love songs to catchy compendiums by musicians who just happen to be gay. With major record labels frequently shying away from artists (many of the most successful began their careers in the closet), independently produced discs, usually available at cdbaby.com, remain our community's main source of affirming, spirit-raising music.

Some of the discs reviewed below rank at the top of the monthly outvoice.net Top 40

Chart. Since that list is determined by an open net vote, however, there is no way to assess just how much a disc's position derives from artists' well-organized efforts to drum up votes from fans, friends and thrice-removed cousins. (At least one artist's website contains a direct link to the voting page). More reliable are the annual OutMusic.com awards, the majority of which are judged by panels of respected LGBT music journalists, radio DJs, producers, vocalists, lyricists and composers.

Jay Spears: Boy Howdy (www.jayspears.com) A Los Angeles singer/songwriter/string-player whose tongue is most definitely in cheek when it's not occupied with other pursuits, Jay Spears of-



fers a unique, thoroughly delightful, and more than occasionally wry take on life. The voice itself will hardly earn him a Met audition, but his brash presentation and go-get-'em lyrics definitely push this disc to the top of the

chart.

It's hard to pick favorites. "I Like Mike" (What's Not to Like? He's the best darn thing to come down the pike) is more of a chant than a song, with a peanut-gallery chorus echoing phrases such as "He's always playing hardball, that's my Mike." If Mike's got "an attitude bordering on brattitude," it reflects Spears' own, which adds to the fun. "Positive" is one of the finest songs about the stickiness of status disclosure yet written, while "You Will Love Again" and "Lullaby for Bea" are disarmingly tender. Ending with "Oh Hell!" and "House on Fire" ("A great big beef-bb caught my eye, And soon the sparks began to fly"), *Boy Howdy* is a cheering affirmation of gay love.

four-letter freedom will never land him an audience at the White House, Currie's oversized, must-hear evocations establish him as a side-splitting genius on the edge of genderbending hysteria.



Scott Freedman: Some Company (www.scottfreedman.com) Winner of OutVoice's "Outstanding New Recording-Male" Award of 2002, New Jersey native Freedman is a 23-year-old bisexual singer/songwriter and speaker whose frequent concerts, including a performance in the Sydney Opera House, alternate with "Battling Biphobia and Bringing Bisexuals Back to Both Communities" lecture tours. His fourth disc, featuring 10 solo numbers with piano self-accompaniment, alternates catchy, welcoming ballads like Cat Stevens' "The Wind" with original, frequently mile-a-minute laments over lost love and relationship.

Freedman's assets include a lovely voice, occasionally employed with a tiresome catch in the throat meant to signal deep feelings; a facile touch marred by an annoyingly brittle-sounding piano; and an insistent publicist whose ceaseless nagging inquiries bring the query "Have you cum yet?" to mind. This approach is mirrored in some of Freedman's most driving outpourings, which would have benefited by a bit of space between notes and words. The man certainly has a lot to say, much of it attractive enough to warrant your attention.

Kate Schutt: Broken - Wild Whip Records (www.kateschutt.com) Kate Schutt is a fascinating, highly original singer and guitarist. The Harvard and Berklee

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Hearty, solid fare SFS under Blomstedt — like old times

by Philip Campbell

Ever since his decade as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt has been making annual return visits to Davies Hall. His successor, Michael Tilson Thomas has been on the job for seven seasons now and we are lucky to have him, but should anyone forget that he inherited an already proficient orchestra — Papa Blomstedt's homecoming engagements are a happy reminder.

Blomstedt never had the same electric charisma on the podium as MTT and his taste was always more conservative. Nevertheless, his love and understanding of the core 19th century repertoire and his particular genius with the Scandinavian catalog provided an orchestra-building effect that has made the new leader's innovations possible.

Seeing Blomstedt for the past two weeks has brought back many good memories and his hearty helpings of standard concert masterworks have provided the aural equivalent of comfort food during the sad days of the war.

Last week was a perfect example of the maestro's strengths. Generally considered one of the best Bruckner interpreters living, he brought us a lean and rhythmically vital *Symphony No. 4 Romantic* that proved thrilling and engrossing in equal measure.

The influence of Wagner on Bruckner was immediately apparent in the sense of storytelling created from the opening measures. Blomstedt also highlighted the effect Bruckner had on Mahler in the exquisite depiction of the sounds of nature. It was a measured and lyrical rendition that built to almost unbearable intensity in the exalted finale.

The conductor's old colleagues and the few who are new to the orchestra played with a freshness and unanimity that must have made him proud. The brass section — so important to the success of the piece — was particularly tight and impressive.

Tilson Thomas has a superb new concertmaster in Alexander Barantschik and Blomstedt reaped the benefits with string playing that was sweet and also capable of remaining audible during the big moments.

The concert opened with



Pianist Emanuel Ax

Mendelssohn's suite from the incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. It was surprisingly appropriate as a lead-in to the Bruckner. Blomstedt's stately approach lost some of the gossamer wit and rustic humor, but the power of the concluding *Wedding March* certainly foreshadowed the wonderful horn playing that would reappear after intermission.

Ax on piano

The previous week allowed collaboration between Blomstedt and another local favorite — pianist Emanuel Ax. They chose a work that could showcase both their talents. The Brahms' *Piano Concerto No. 1* is a workout for the soloist and the accompanying orchestra, requiring stamina and sympathy from both. The two musicians were equal to the task, even if Ax proved less successful.

The heavy quality of the scoring in the First and Brahms in particular is mother's milk to Blomstedt and he mined the symphonic aspects of the piece with expected flair.

Ax is a pianist of power and precision, not usually admired for his lyrical sense. Ironically, his playing was most appealing in the quieter reflective episodes. A few mistakes aside, it remained a satisfying performance and his weighty pounding in the finale was undeniably exciting.

The guest soloist usually gets the first half of the bill, but the concert opened unconventionally with Schumann's high-spirited *Fourth Symphony*. Again, this is Blomstedt territory and he brought new vitality to the score and dispelled any complaints one might have with the composer's often criticized orchestration.

Textures were bright and transparent throughout with Barantschik and the strings making some wonderfully lilting sounds. The composer's wish to have the Fourth played without breaks between the movements worked well here and the score seemed not only cohesive, but also exceptionally lively.

With his ramrod straight posture and clear unfussy gestures, Blomstedt belies his age and shows no visible signs of slowing down. The twinkle in his eyes betrays a foxy wit and he clearly enjoys the loyalty of his old co-workers. His prestigious current position as Music Director of the famed Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig maintains his strong international reputation, but we can only hope that his commitments abroad will not deter him from making his annual appearance in his old home by the Bay.

MTT returns this week with a characteristically intriguing program that includes his own *Songs of Emily Dickinson*. His predecessor has the orchestra all warmed up for him. ▼



Donald Currie: Sex & Mayhem Parts One & Two (cdbaby.com/cd/donaldcurrie) Donald Currie's outrageous, let-it-all-hang-out CD "audiobooks" brilliantly fulfill their creator's intent to create "a movie made of sound." His first two installments in what will become the four-part audio equivalent of Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* lead us from a San Francisco State freshman's first flaming love affair in 1964 to his subsequent stoned-out epiphanies at Jefferson Airplane shows. In the process, we receive a hilarious crash course in West Coast counterculture Homo 101.

The format is nonstop, triple-tongued narrative interspersed with brilliant musical interjections and sonic collages. Part One, released last year, quickly earned Currie the "Best Literary Performer" award from the Stonewall Society. While his raunchy, no-holds-barred homoeroticism and

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The politics of great music

by Tim Pfaff

The box set, the Oscar of the record industry, is normally reserved for its superstars. Given that, Nonesuch's new *Rzewski Plays Rzewski*, a seven-disc survey of the work of one of the most interesting musicians working today, is a singular wonder. There isn't a less starry or starstruck composer than Belgian-based American composer-pianist Frederic Rzewski (pronounced ZHEV-ski), yet Nonesuch has made a new (not re-) release of his most important music that again confirms the enterprising label as the little engine that could.

Rzewski has recorded much of this music before, superlatively, yet these are new recordings. The set proves how much the already great music has grown. That it has changed was inevitable, since significant stretches of it are improvisational, and necessarily emerge differently at every playing. Even so, both the scores and the play-

ing have taken on greater depth. Even if they hadn't, the music is eerily timely. Even Nonesuch couldn't have foreseen its topicality when the pieces were recorded in Brussels from 1998 to March 2001. Yet it cauterizes the horrors and banalities of recent weeks.

Gay listeners might start with the final disc, devoted to a pithy new reading of the 1992 *De Profundis*, set to a series of texts from Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Gaol." Rzewski says the work was spawned by talks with friends about "the politics of sexuality," and that Wilde's words seemed "as timely as ever." With the fouled US Supreme Court about to review a gay sodomy case that could influence federal "policy" for the rest of our lives, it's a tonic to find such music in the normally cloistered world of "classical" music.

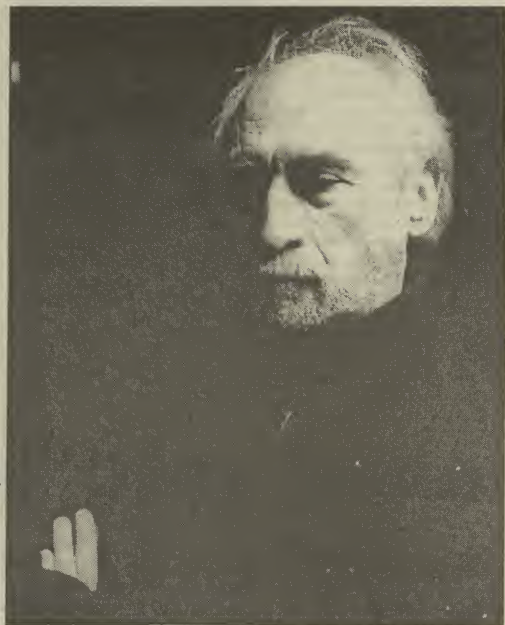
That's not exactly where Rzewski fits, or works — although the most adventurous pianists of the day have picked up, or commissioned, much of his music. (The wonderful *Four American Ballads* of 1978-79, which open

the new set, were written for the late gay pianist Paul Jacobs.) I've had the pleasure of hearing Rzewski play live several times — once, in San Francisco, with his fellow spirit Ursula Oppens, for whom he composed the deeply moving *Mayn Yngele* (1988-89), a set of 24 variations that begins Disc 2 — and it's always startling to encounter him in venues where one normally encounters the luminaries. But there's always the sense that he's working as much as playing, and that — to use a Wilde line he quotes — his attitude is, "I have no desire to complain."

Rzewski's is defiant but not angry music, and a principal source of its power is its deep capacity to attract rather than put off. Contemporary music doesn't get more uncompromising and, at the same time, inviting, than this. It follows only its own bidding — be that imaginative obeisance to classical forms (the 1991 Sonata; the several sets of variations), as-tringent atonalities, or the most probing of improvisations — while, almost miraculously, inviting everyone in rather than closing the doors to all but savvy musical insiders. Averse as I am to applying such words to art, I can't resist calling this honest music, and its towering integrity continues to enliven it and keep it new.

People power

Rzewski is probably best-known for his set of 36 Variations on "The People United Will Never Be Defeated," a work of inexhaustible depth, imagination, and expressive resourcefulness. Even if the original tune no longer makes the charts of today's war protests (though perhaps it does), Rzewski still "sings" (and hums and thrums and bangs and whistles) it, and I find this new version one of the most stirring, uplifting anti-authoritarian statements on



Frederic Rzewski in a box: defiant but not angry music.

today's nightmarish scene. Little else — including the Requiems, laments, and other spiritual works I've tried to buoy my defeated spirits with — has so ferried me through these dark times.

It's the ideal antidote to the arrogance and bluster that promise grimmer victories, and its spirit is, by comparison, arrestingly pure. Musically, it manifests in playing of such supreme mastery that the feeling is one of profound relaxation, poise, and unwavering focus. The work's thumps on the piano body, whistles, humming, and other wordless exclamations from the performer, well-known as they are, still retain their capac-

ity to startle and quicken the spirits. It's nothing short of hope and freedom rendered in sound and, while it has you in its grip, seems like the only music worth hearing.

But there's more where that came from, including the first four parts of *The Road*, which Rzewski calls a "novel" he expects to last about eight hours when completed (and currently occupies Discs 4 & 5). People who start at the beginning of this wondrous collection will be greeted by the Ballads, whose lvesian penchant for the interweaving of people's music (mostly protest songs here) re-envisions an America someone might still want to inhabit. ▼

StevenUnderhill.com

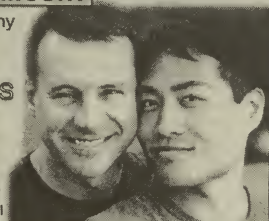
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Dud studs

by Robert Julian

Boyfriends from Hell, edited by Kevin Bentley; Green Candy Press, \$14.95

Any single gay man, or any gay man who has ever been single, will find something to appreciate in *Boyfriends From Hell: True Tales of Twisted Lovers, Disastrous Dates, and Love Gone Wrong*. This delightful anthology of short stories pretty much covers the waterfront of dreadful relationship experiences, with an emphasis on liaisons that endured at least a few months before they headed south.

Jim Coughenour, with his wonderful prose style, opens the book with "Happy Birthday," a tale of young love and wretched disrespect that begins in Chicago, circa 1981. "Double Booking" by Steve Nugent laments the difficulty of juggling two lovers at once, when one of them is a psycho. And Jerry Rosco in "My Boyfriend Brought Home a Rock Band" tells



what happens when his hot young Manhattan boyfriend starts hanging out with the Butthole Surfers and invites them to spend a few weeks chez Rosco.

One of the wonderful and unexpected pleasures of *Boyfriends From Hell* is the uniformly high quality of the writing. The authors not only bring great objectivity to the subject, but they demonstrate

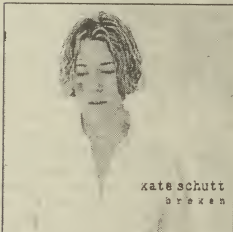
both a sense of humor and significant depth of perception. In some cases, the author is the boyfriend from hell. Variations on the hellish theme include speed freaks, predatory rice queens, and sadistic street trade in New Orleans' French Quarter. Among the stories set in San Francisco, "Widow Hopper" by the book's editor, Kevin Bentley, is a standout. Bentley illuminates the twisted saga of a generously endowed but dim home healthcare worker with a penchant for romancing the surviving spouses of his dying AIDS patients.

If you're looking for a consistently engaging read, or a little gift for a "sister," you can't go wrong with *Boyfriends From Hell*. And if editor Bentley has half a brain (something we can't take for granted after his affair with the "widow hopper"), he should start recruiting lesbian writers right now for *Girlfriends From Hell*. There have to be some women out there willing to break that politically correct code of silence to dish the dirt on some twisted sisters. ▼

Queer voices

◀ page 33

College of Music graduate has a large vocal range, including a most appealing, high, little-girl whisper that cajoles its way to the center of your attention. *Broken*, her most recent release in a live-performance trilogy, features 10 "jazz deconstructed" tracks. In addition to two by Schutt, we are treated to Cyndi Lauper's "Time After Time," George Michael's "Father Figure," Janet Jackson's "Miss You Much," and the classic "The Lady is a Tramp," "Summertime," "My Funny Valentine," "The Autumn Leaves," and "Over the Rainbow."



Sometimes Schutt comes across as vital and driving, other times a halting, half-somnambulist figure who wistfully whispers words well beyond the beat. She occasionally overdoes her tricks (this is live performance, after all), but she consistently impresses as a major talent well in the making.

Shimmerplanet: Welcome to Shimmerplanet - Engine Company Records (www.shimmerplanet.com) This debut album by the New York-based Shimmerplanet duo — vocalist/key-boardist John Fischer (gay) and vocalist Carolyn Eufrazio (straight) — was produced by guitarist Blake Morgan (Lenny



Kravitz, Patti Rothberg) and mastered by Phil "Butcher Bros." Nicolò (Aerosmith, The Police). The 10 selections, written by Fischer with Eufrazio's assistance on "Everything's Perfect," are featured prominently in *Up to the Roof*, a forthcoming film written by John Buffalo Mailer (Norman's son). There's some fascinating stuff here, a sometimes brooding, sometimes spacey, other times driving sound allied to probing lyrics. Eufrazio, who has a great pop voice with a wide range of colors and expression, originally considered a career in opera, and shares classical training with her longtime accompanist Fischer. If that sounds the least bit forbidding, the music isn't. If the movie is as good as the music, this duo is well on the road to success.



Freddy Freeman: Waiting for an Echo (www.freddyfreeman.com) New Yorker Freeman's mp3-downloadable debut CD-R

and frequent live performances with his band The Free Men have garnered him quite a following. His eight acoustic tracks, sometimes described as folk-based, range the stylistic gamut and push the soft-rock envelope. All are well-sung, thoughtful, and quite enjoyable, with all but Chris Wilson's "Broken" penned by Freeman. The disc carries a warning about the use of "fuck" in "Village Crawl," but of greater concern is the tiny sound of a low-budget recording. My favorite track is "Strip Me Naked." With so much good to offer, let's divert enough from the war economy to provide Freeman with better sonics and printed lyrics next time around.



Cher Neill: The St. Lawrence Blvd. Semi-annual

Sean Dorsey

◀ Arts cover



Dorsey carves out space for queer bodies.

and TransArt events.

While building on his reputation and experience, his upcoming performance at ODC includes two pieces never before seen: "Red Tie, Red Lipstick," featuring Dorsey and dancer Linda Case portraying the vulnerability, honesty, and visibility issues of butch-femme relationships; and "Hero," with dancer Ami Student cruising through the adventures of gay personal ads, body image, and bio/transny fag energies. "Red Tie, Red Lipstick" is set to the hip-hop poetry of transgender spoken-word artists Marcus Rene Van, while "Hero," according to Dorsey, is unabashedly sexual, sassy, and humorous, and is "probably the most explicit stuff to hit the ODC stage."

Dorsey's vision leaves no detail unexplored; sound design, original sound scores, and collaborations with poets, sound artists, and musicians are key elements to his dances.

"I hope to layer musicality or resonance to the audience's experience of my sound score," he says. "The text and sound I use are not secondary or accidental. I think of myself as a movement and sound artist."

Dorsey hopes San Francisco's LGBT community will take advantage of such outwardly queer representation at a premier dance facility to branch out from their more usual forms of weekend entertainment.

"Queer communities are not yet strongly invested in modern dance as an art form," says Dorsey. I think they have found spoken word, slam poetry, hip-hop, and theater more authentically reflect

their experiences as queer or trans, in contrast to modern dance, which tends toward the abstract and generally reflects mainstream experience."

Dorsey adds that "lots of folks are intimidated by modern dance. I feel strongly that audiences are not stupid — audiences are complex people with complicated lives and emotions, hungry to witness something that resonates with them. It's our responsibility as artists to make work that is relevant, provocative, and accessible. That's what motivates my work. That and a desire to insert trans and queer into the equation." ▼

Friday and Saturday's performances are at the ODC Theater, 3153 17th Street, at Shotwell, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$12-\$15 sliding scale. Call the Box Office at: 415-863-9834.

Street Sale (www.colba.net/~lejay/) Cheryl Neill is a Canadian feminist frequently found at womyn's music festivals, singing with folksy frankness. A poet who has written, produced and directed more than 20 musicals, her twangy voice lends itself well to 10 original tracks with titles such as

"Sweet Justice" and "L'Androgyne Bookstore." Despite years of experience in the arts, she must have great vision, because her CD booklet's print is too small for me to read without strain. Hers isn't the homogenized voice of a pop icon, but there's much here to enjoy. ▼

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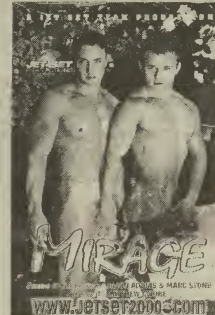
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OUT & ABOUT

Fri 18

'Queer Theory' @ Exit Theatre

Impact Theatre presents the world premiere of *Queer Theory*, written and directed by John Fisher (*Medea: The Musical*; *The Joy of Gay Sex*; *Combat!*). His latest work is about one Jeff Webster, Ph.D., the hottest queer theory professor in the nation. Harvard wants him. Students want him (and have him regularly during office hours). He contends people of the 16th century were prone to slip from one gender to another, but his brash theories are about to collide with his genitals. Starring David Ball, Pete Caslavka, Victoria Cuatros, Andrew Harkins, Matthew Martin, Ross Pasquale, Valerie Weak, and Matt Weiner. \$15 (\$10 students/seniors). 8pm Thu-Sat thru May 17. The Exit theatre, 156 Eddy St. Tix: 510-464-4468; impacttheatre.com

Cedric Brown @ Jon Sims Center

In concert: AIRspace artist-in-residence Cedric Brown explores the crossroads of jazz and identity through song interpretations and poetic commentary, accompanied by the 1150 Trio (Elise Giancola on piano, Jory Cunningham on bass, Glen Iwao on drums). \$5-\$10 sliding (NO-TAFLOF). 8pm. Jon Sims Center for the Arts, 1519 Mission St. (btwn 11th St. & South Van Ness). Tix/info: 554-0402; www.jonsimsctr.org

'Shirley Mental'

@ Theatre Rhinoceros

Hardcore Thrush Productions presents the premiere of Brit Zane's "The Legend of Shirley Mental," the new musical comedy from the creator of "Night of the Living Drag Queens." It's the story of an upper-middle-class child who becomes an apple-selling pauper when the Great Depression affects her family. She and sidekick Lil' Becky sneak into a Shirley Temple movie, and her fate is forever altered. Colorful characters abound. Directed by Beth Trifilo. Original music by Tex Dworkin, Nathaniel Hawkes, Lord Mirgraine, and Melissa Schatz. \$13. 8:30pm April 18, 19, 25 & 26; 3:30 & 7:30pm April 27.

René Capone @ Live Art Gallery

Opening reception: an exhibition of new work by René Capone, best known for his figurative paintings and watercolors, full of enigmatic symbolism and mystery. Free. 8-11pm. Show runs thru April 30. 151 Potrero Ave. Info: 254-3141; www.renecapone.com

'Tenderloin Stations of the Cross'

Father River Sims of Temenos Catholic Worker, a gay man who ministers to the homeless, hustlers, drug users and others in the Polk Gulch area, leads "Tenderloin Stations of the Cross." Join in calling for solutions that honor the dignity and God-given rights of homeless people, and in calling for an end to war. Noon-2:30pm. Meet outside of the State Office Bldg. at McAllister & Van Ness. Info: 253-2124; www.temenos.org

Cheap Trick @ The Stud

DJs Jeff Chandler, Monkeyboy, and Adrian & the Mysterious D lure the boys into "Cheap Trick" with wild mixes of electro, indie, oldschool, funk, pop, and rock. Nova Darkstar and other nearly naked faerie boys gyrate for your leering pleasure. \$6 cover. 10pm-3am. The Stud Bar, 399 9th St. (at Harrison).

Sat 19

'White Disabled Talent' @ NCTC

Opening night: New Conservatory Theatre Center presents "White Disabled Talent," written and performed by Greg Walloch. It's a funny, ironic



"Semana Santa/Cloning Eve and Geisha," oil on canvas, 2003 by Masami Teraoka, part of "US Inquisition" at Catharine Clark Gallery. See Thursday.

commentary on life from the point of view of a twenty-something disabled, gay man, presented in the vein of Spalding Gray, Sandra Bernhard and David Sedaris, with first-person semi-autobiographical life-and-times monologues delivered on a bare stage. The power of Walloch's work is simply his story. \$25 opening night with post-show reception; \$17 Wed & Thu; \$20 Fri & Sat. Thru April 27. NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. (near Market). Tix/info: 861-8972; www.nctcsf.org

'Art of Design' @ SFMOMA

Opening: "The Art of Design: Selections from the Permanent Collection of Architecture and Design," featuring more than 100 objects of architecture, graphic design and industrial design from a collection that numbers more than 4,000 works, curated by Joseph Rosa, SFMOMA Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design. \$10 adults; \$7 seniors; \$6 students. Open daily (except Wed.) 11am-6pm (till 9pm Thu.). 151 Third St. Info: 357-4000; sfmoma.org

Anjelica Devarox @ Marlana's

The co-hostess of "Fauxgirls," Anjelica Devarox, hosts a special party and show to benefit the Empress Council of SF. All performers welcome. Not a "Fauxgirls" show, but several Fauxgirls will be among the performers. Complimentary buffet at 8pm; show at 9pm. 488 Hayes St. (at Octavia). Info: 864-6672.

'Easter Basket-Cases' @ ATA Gallery

Other Cinema celebrates the holiday with "Easter Basket-Cases," a program of film/video works on "Incredibly Strange Religion." Featuring the theatrical premiere of Kenneth Anger's latest, *The Man We Want to Hang*, a 15-min. evocation of British occult master Aleister Crowley. Others include the 'phobic Rev. Donald Wildmon's *The Disney Boycott*, a Christian fundamentalist attack on Walt for his gay-friendly ways, and Satanic rituals in Hal Lindsey's *The Occult*, and *Countdown to Armageddon*, the Heaven's Gate recruitment tape. \$5. 8pm. 992 Valencia St. Info: 824-3890.

Sun 20

'Indulgence 4:20' @ Dolores Park

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence present "Indulgence 4:20 — Let There Be Splendor in the Grass," the Easter Party. The Sisters will be presenting awards and canonizing saints. Kids' Fun starts at Noon with egg races, egg hunts, face painting, cup-cake walk and more. Stage show kicks off at 1pm with the SF Lesbian/Gay Free-

dom Band, FutureTrybe, David Mahr, Saint Ethel Merman & Luciano Pavarazzi (Mark Sargent & Michael Grove), Manley Lennox, Miss Gay San Francisco 2003, Polkacide, and The Acid Housewife (David Bicha, Isaac Brantner, Trauma Flintstone, Kim Larsen, Roderick McFarland, and Mark Sargent). Contests: "Doin' It Doggie Style" (The Doggie Costume Contest); The Easter Bonnet Contest; The Hunky Jesus Contest. Win cash prizes and gifts. Noon-4pm. Dolores Park, 18th & Dolores St. Info: www.thisisters.org



Andrew Calabrese stars in Hardcore Thrush Productions' "The Legend of Shirley Mental" at Theatre Rhinoceros. See Friday.

'How Weird Street Faire'

World Peace Through Technology presents "The Expanding Universe," the theme for the 4th annual "How Weird Street Faire," with four stages of DJs, live acts, speakers and performers, including DJs KJ, Lorin, Adam, Kode IV, Laird, Loran, Brass Tax, Space Cowboys and Love Projectors. Life acts: Penta, Strange Attractor, Mechanica, Waterjuice. \$5 without costume; \$2 wearing something weird. 12 noon-8pm. 12th & Howard sts. Info: www.howweird.org

'Hubbub'

@ Hyena Playhouse

Larry-bob hosts "Hubbub: Queer Spoken Word," with featured readers Julia Serano and Jason Alley. Alley is

on the editorial staff of *Shellac*, an interdisciplinary, queer, people-of-color focused zine/journal. Serano is a spoken word artist who makes gender deconstruction fun. Host Larry-bob has published the queer zine *Holy Tits* since 1989, and produces the weekly email list of non-mainstream events "Queer Things To Do In San Francisco." Open mike follows featured readers; bring pieces (prose, poetry, whatever) of not more than 5 min. to read. Signup at 2:30pm; reading at 3pm. \$3 donation (NO-TAFLOF). All ages. Hyena Playhouse, 2390 Mission St., Suite #10 (basement, elevator accessible), at 20th St. Info: 821-3601; holytitsclamps.com/hubbub

SF Prime Timers @ Unitarian Church

The San Francisco Prime Timers (the former G40+ Club) hosts George Quick, Managing Director of the New Conservatory Theatre Center, who will speak about this Pride Season which continues through June with *When Pigs Fly* and *Mysterious Skin*. Free. 2-4pm. First Unitarian Universalist Church, 1187 Franklin (at Geary). Info: 552-1997.

Dignity/SF @ 7th Ave. Church

Easter Sunday mass, with Evening Prayer (Vespers), hosted by Dignity/SF, a self-governing faith community of GLBT Catholics, their families and friends. 5:30pm. Seventh Ave. Presbyterian Church, 1329 7th Ave. Info: 681-2491; www.dignitysf.org; www.sanfrancisco/

Gay-friendly Easter service @ Freedom in Christ Church

Gay affirming "Resurrection Service." 6pm. 601 Dolores St. (at 19th St.). Freedom in Christ Evangelical Church, 601 Dolores St. (at 19th St.). Info: 970-8149; www.freedom-inchrist-sf.org

Easter Breakfast @ First Christian Church, Vallejo

Gay affirming breakfast for the Vallejo/Solano LGBT community, hosted by the First Christian Church and Saint Victor's Old Catholic. 9am. Easter service follows at 10:30am. 1035 Indiana St., Vallejo (Exit I-80 at Tennessee and go west to Colusa and turn right to Indiana). RSVP: (707) 643-7973. Info: www.vallejochristian.com

Easter Services @ MCC-SF

Metropolitan Community Church, a house of prayer for all people, and a home for queer spirituality, celebrates Easter with services at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., and 7 p.m. with the Rev. Dr. G. Penny Nixon presiding. Experience Resurrection! The Queer Body is Alive! 150 Eureka St. (btwn 18th and 19th Streets). Info: www.mccsf.org

Sundance Saloon @ Space 550

"Sundance Saloon 5th Anniversary Party." Lots of Country Western dancing, with live music by Donna Boatman, Doug Stevens, and Ed Morgan. Sundance Saloon opened its doors five years ago for two-stepping and line dancing every Sunday, and is more popular than ever. It is produced and maintained entirely by unpaid volunteers. Free admission. 6-11pm (dance instruction 6-7:30pm). 550 Barnevel Ave. Info: 820-1403; www.sundancesaloon.org

'Trash!' @ The Powerhouse

DJ Bus Station John plays gay bar/bathroom classics & curios, with the best in HI-NRG, Eurodisco & Funk. 9pm till late. 1347 Folsom St. Info: 552-8689

'Devotion' @ The End Up

Resident DJ Reuben Mancias and guests from around the world bring soulful house music to the devoted. For hard-core house heads. \$10 cover. 8pm-4am. 401 6th St. (at Harrison).

HMI @ Eros

"Man Massage 101: For Men," taught by Ken Bridgeman, focusing on the back of the body. Attending both classes gives you the basic principles for giving a full body Swedish massage. EROS provides everything you will need for the class. \$60. 2-6:30pm. Eros, 2051 Market St. (at Dolores). Registration: www.harveymilk.org

Mon 21

Q-Sangha @ MCC-SF

Q-Sangha: Mindful Mondays at MCC presents "Easter Monday/Earth Day: After Resurrection, Laundry." Join in a special celebration of the life and teachings of Jesus from a Buddhist perspective in honor of Mother Earth, including Candlelight Blessings and Mindful Communion. Contemporary Buddhist Spirituality for Buddhists, Christians and Other Seekers. April Theme: "The Birthless and Deathless Nature of Our True Self." 7pm. 150 Eureka St. Info: www.mccsf.org

DJ David Harrington @ SFPALM

The SF Performing Arts Library & Museum (SFPALM) presents "A DJ Listening Party with David Harrington," in which the founder, artistic director and violinist of Kronos Quartet will share with audience his ongoing search for the most inspiring, funky, eclectic and innovative new musical sounds being created around the globe. Free (seating limited). 7pm. Veterans Bldg., 401 Van Ness Ave. (at McAllister), 4th floor. Reservations: 255-4800. Info: www.sfpalm.org

HMI @ The Center

"Intermediate Knitting" taught by Christopher Diem, who will show you how to take knitting to the next level, how not to be intimidated by new projects, and the secrets of turning a simple pattern into a hand-crafted piece of art. \$115; 5 Mondays, April 21-May 19; 7:30-9:30 pm. Location: The Center, 1800 Market St. (at Octavia). Registration: www.harveymilk.org

Tue 22

HMI @ The Center

Super Sex Technologies: For Women. Taught by Annie Sprinkle, Ph.D. Learn basic sex magic, sexual healing techniques, ecstasy breathing, how to have energy orgasms, and more. Dress in loose, comfy clothing and bring a mat or blanket on which to lie. \$25. 6:30-9:30pm. SF LGBT Community Center, Room 400. Registration: www.harveymilk.org

Wed 23

'Women Against War' @ Burbank Center, Santa Rosa

Dance Brigade presents "Women Against War: A Vision for Peace," featuring Holly Near, Ferron and Linda Tilley & the Cultural Heritage Choir, along with guest artists. Reflective and uplifting music interwoven with spoken word, dance theater, taiko drumming, and martial arts. Organized by Dance Brigade Artistic Di-



"Passion revisited," watercolor, color pencil and acrylic on paper, 2003, by René Capone, part of his Live Art Gallery. See Friday.

rector Krissy Keefer. \$25. 7pm. Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, Ruth Finley Person Theater, 50 Mark West Springs Rd., Santa Rosa. Tix: 707-546-3600. Info: 415-273-4633; www.DanceMission.com

HMI @ The Center

HMI Class: "Supermarket Sado-masochism: For Women," taught by Mistress Morgana Maye. Learn how to indulge in intricate BDSM play with materials readily available at your local grocery, drug, or hardware store. Demonstration will focus on educated shopping and safe playing. \$20. 6:30-9:30pm. The Center, 1800 Market @ Octavia. Registration: www.harveymilk.org.

Kronos Quartet

@ School of the Arts

The SF Unified Schools District's only public high school devoted to the arts is hosting a special evening of music featuring the acclaimed Kronos Quartet. \$25 adv; \$35 door; \$75 w/post-concert reception, dinner and party at the Miraloma Clubhouse. 7:30pm. 555 Portola. Tix/info: 282-6717.

'Dining Out For Life'

@ local restaurants

Join The STOP AIDS Project for their 2nd Annual "Dining Out For Life." Help stop the spread of HIV by dining at one of the participating restaurants such as Harvey's (500 Castro St.), 2223 Restaurant (2223 Market St.), Anchor Oyster Bar (579 Castro St.), Bagdad Cafe (2295 Market St.), Blue (2337 Market St.), Catch (2362 Market St.), Lalo's (2247 Market St.), La Moore (4072 18th St.), Cote Sud (4238 18th St.), Destino (1815 Market St.), Ma Tante Sumi (4243 18th St.), Home Restaurant (2100 Market St.), MECCA (2029 Market St.), Pasta Pomodoro - Castro (2304

Market St.), Red Grill & Whiskey Lounge (4063 18th St.), Firefly (4288 24th St.), Ristorante Capri - Pizza (2272 Market St.), Bruno's (2389 Mission St.) and many others. 25-percent of your food bill will benefit the HIV prevention programs of the STOP AIDS Project. For details, visit the Dining Out For Life website at www.diningoutforlife.com

'Stood Up!' @ The Stud

"Stood Up!" A diverse evening of stand up comedy and mayhem. The Bay Area's best and brightest comics come together for a diverse evening of comedy. Featuring Ronn Vigh, Zoe Dunning, Reannie Roads, Pippi Love-stocking and more. \$5. 8:30pm. 9th & Harrison.

Thu 24

'Unitard: Showdown' @ The Center

The Harvey Milk Institute Arts & Culture Series presents "Unitard: Showdown," featuring the NYC sketch comedy troupe Unitard — Mike Albo, Nora Burns and David Ilku — with special guest Bridget Schwartz. Scathing rapid-fire comic monologues and social commentary for all label whores, social junkies, party crashers, gym fags, crystal freaks, super models, baby-haters and press hounds. \$20. 7pm reception; 8pm show. Also on Fri & Sat, April 25 & 26. SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St. (at Octavia). Tix/info: 865-5633; www.harveymilk.org

LGBT adoption @ Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley
The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry presents a "Lavender Lunch" with Kaija Langley

of Family Builders by Adoption. Topic: "Adoption Options for LGBT People." Bring lunch. Free. 12:30-1:30pm. Mudd Hall 100, Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Ave., Berkeley. Info: 510-849-8206.

'Hybrid Project'

@ Intersection for the Arts

Intersection presents "The Hybrid Project," a culmination of nearly a year's worth of work from more than 25 dancers, performers, musicians and poets, and six month's worth of audience ideas realized through beat-boxing, dancing, hip hop, flamenco, rapping, poetry, movement and drumming, creating a new language of communication. \$9-\$15 sliding. 8pm. Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia St. (btwn 15th & 16th). Tix/info: 626-2787; www.theintersection.org

Masami Teraoka

@ Catharine Clark Gallery

Opening reception: "US Inquisition," paintings by Masami Teraoka, connecting religion and politics in the wake of recent catastrophic world events, when the politics of Islamic fundamentalism penetrated the US "body" of capitalism. Acts of terror and crisis have ushered in a loss of faith, civil liberties and personal freedoms. Teraoka envisions a US Inquisition on both political and personal fronts world-wide. Screenings in the DVD/Video Project Room. Free. 5:30-7:30pm. 49 Geary St. Info: 399-1439; www.cclarkgallery.com

'Pulp Friction'

@ Main Library

Pulp Friction: Uncovering the Golden Age of Gay Male Pulp, Michael Bronski's new anthology presents eighteen rare excerpts from pre-Stonewall gay male writing. Bronski and other noted local authors including Victor Banis ("Don Holliday"), Katherine V. Forrest, Michael Nava, Kirk Reed, F. Allen Sawyer, Wickie Stamps, and Matt Bernstein. Sycamore will read from these culturally significant historical documents. Free. 6pm. Main Library, Lower Level, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin Street (at Grove).

Margaret Jenkins

@ Herbst Pavilion

Opening-night gala: The Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, one of the nation's great pioneering modern dance troupes, celebrates its 30th anniversary with "Three Decades of Dance," six nights of compelling choreography, highlighting the company's classic repertory. Presented in association with the Fort Mason Foundation, with five musical accompaniment by the acclaimed Paul Dresner Ensemble. \$50 gala; \$25 gen'l adm; \$15 student/senior. 8pm. Fort Mason Center's Herbst Pavilion, Marina & Buchanan streets. Tix/info: 392-4400; www.mjdc.org

'Make Art or DIY Trying'

@ Spanganga Gallery

"Make Art Happen or DIY Trying," the Independent Artist-how-to-workshop series, offers "The Framework" for filming and the motivation for making your own movie. If you have indy visions or Hollywood dreams, get the info you need from DIY panelists Laura Plotkin (Red Rain, the life of Gina Boom Boom Guidi); Jon Wal-drep (staged the all nude version of The Sound of Music at the state penitentiary in Chico); and Thad Povey (founder of The Scratch Film Junkies). Moderator Tony DuShane is the founder and director of Filmjunkie. \$5. 6:30-8:30pm. Also on Saturday, April 26 from 1-3pm, w/film screening afterwards from 3-5pm. 3376 19th St.

WANNA SUBMIT?

Send your calendar event listings to:

Mark Mardon
Out & About
Bay Area Reporter
395 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

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photo by Steven Underhill (415) 878-2463

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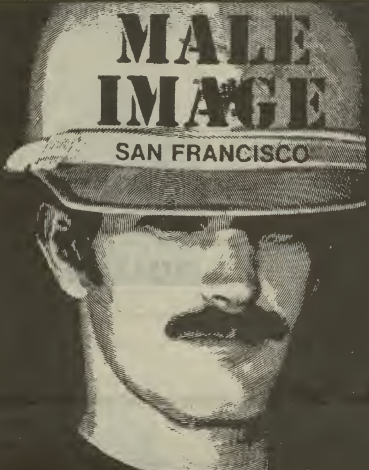


NYC sketch comedy troupe Unitard — Mike Albo, Nora Burns and David Ilku (with special guest Bridget Schwartz) — perform "Unitard: Showdown" at The Center. See Thursday.



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Nominations are in

Are you up for a Golden Dildeaux?

by Mister Marcus

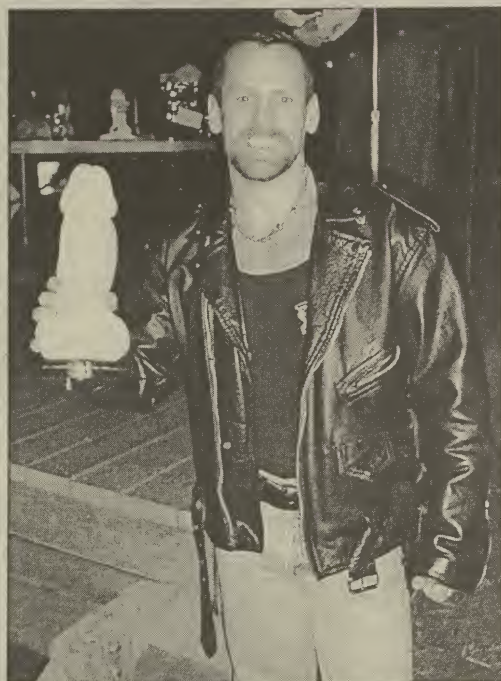
One of the campiest nights of the year — and all in good fun! — takes place this Saturday night, April 19 at the Eagle Tavern. That's when Lenny Broberg and Donna Sachet once again take to the stage to introduce the presenters in 22 categories who will announce the winners of the annual "Golden Dildeaux Awards," a hugely popular event staged by the Golden Gate Guards MC. The voting ended last Saturday, April 12, and the results are being tabulated even as you read this.

For those who have only an inkling of the nature of "The World's Only Sex Awards," know they were created in 1971, and the first awards ceremony was staged at the Boot Camp Bar on 8th & Bryant. The late San Francisco Chronicle columnist, Herb Caen, wasted no time in seizing the opportunity to scoop whatever competition existed at the time by mentioning the "printable" categories to his readership. The first awards ceremony enjoyed the attention of the BBC in London and a press agency from Tokyo, Japan.

After the Boot Camp closed (as a bar), the awards lapsed temporarily until an enterprising member of the Golden Gate Guards recalled their campy nature and asked for permission to stage them as a fundraiser. Since then, the annual event has proven to be one of the highlights of the spring season in San Francisco, especially among the leather people here.

The nominating period is over, and of course the choices have elicited vociferous exclamations of: "How did I get nominated in that category?" — which is the usual reaction. This year, one or two "concerned" citizens initiated a "write-in" vote for a certain SoMa bartender. The bartender in question was not amused! Scott King is such a "scamp!"

Nevertheless, expect an evening of high camp, veiled insults hurled hither and yon, and plenty of hearty laughs. There's a beer/soda bust involved from 2000 to 2300, and always a big crowd on hand



Eric Bernier, former Mr. Edge Leather, was voted Golden Boy 2002 at last year's Golden Dildeaux Awards. He then entered a 3-way marriage, but now is single again. Who will be voted as Golden Boy 2003?

eager to know whom the winners might be. Of course, the Top of the Year, the Dick of Death, and the Golden Boy (best all around sexual person) are the categories that hold the most interest. The Princess Tiny Meat Award has understandably been eliminated (the nominees never showed up) and the Golden Shower Queen was permanently awarded to an East Bay postal employee ("Chuck with the rimless glasses") years ago. But to give others an opportunity to win in that category, it was changed to the Prince of Piss Award.

Hope to see you all there for a fun night you will long remember!

Leather Day of Caring

It's Easter weekend and a lot of charitable and fun events are on

the schedule worldwide. This includes the Leather National Day of Caring (for the homeless) initiated by Ms. World Leather, Karen McGee. Fundraising will be taking place in many cities, including a "Socks and Underwear" benefit for shelters in New York City. This effort, initiated by Mr. Lure Walt Weiss, Mr. NY Eagle Mike Tully and East Coast Rubberman Matthew Michaels, will be held at a private residence in Manhattan. For info on this one, email Mr. Lure2002@aol.com.

On the home front, it's the 30th anniversary of Tenderloin Tessie Dinners, the Easter dinner taking place at First Unitarian Church (1187 Franklin at Gough) from 1300 to 1600. Donations and volunteers are still needed so if you have the time or inclination, call Toby at 431-7221.

As a special fun treat, the Sundance Saloon celebrates its 5th anniversary

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Thursday, April 17

Final competition for a spot on the 2004 Bare Chest Calendar tonight at the Powerhouse when Mr. December 2004 will be chosen. The judges are Audrey Joseph, Dax Berg, Joe Wagenhoffer and James Scott Geras.

Weekend, April 18-21

It's the big Easter leather gathering in Berlin with lots of hedonistic activity and selection of Mr. German Leather 2003. Udo Reichelt will step aside after a successful year. Click on www.blf.de.

Friday, April 18

Porn aficionado Will Clark hosts "Spring Fling 2003" at Daddy's tonight with porn actors galore and other celebs to entertain you.

SF Exiles monthly gathering at the Women's Bldg. With the discussion subject: "What is Women's Space Now?". Doors open 1930, program at 2000.

At the hot new Mezzanine, it's "Wicked Night" with three deejays some surprises!

Saturday, April 19

Annual Golden Dildeaux Awards at the Eagle Tavern from 2000-2300. See above.

Easter Sunday, April 20

Free Easter Sunday Dinner at the First Unitarian Church (Franklin at Geary Blvd.) from 1300 to 1600;

Free 5th Anniversary CW dance party at 550 Barneveld, from 1800 on.

SF Leather Daddy Tony Koester hosts an Easter Basket Auction at Daddy's from 1600 to 2000 with a \$7 beer/soda bust, entertainment and chance for a date with Mr. SF Leather Troy Anicete, among other auction items.

Wednesday, April 23

Leather Buddies night at 933 Harrison. You know the rules. No cologne, no sneakers. For info: 777-HEAD.

Thursday, April 24

Bare Chest Calendar Coverman competition at the Powerhouse, 2130. Five judges, big crowd, 12 hot men w/hot chests. Be there!

next page ►

POLKSTRASSE

Have a hunky Easter!

by Sweet Lips

Well, I am still home trying to get well. I guess being an old man a compression fracture of the first lumbar vertebra takes longer to heal.

I want to wish everyone a very happy Easter on Sunday the 20th. Don't forget to join the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence for their big Easter bash in Dolores Park (off 18th St. between Church & Dolores). It's always a real kick, with lots of people. My favorite parts are the Easter Bonnet Contest and the Hunky Jesus Contest. You should see the fabulous bonnets they come up with! And beware all you heathens, those hot n' hunky Jesus's will convert you in a second! The fun and frolics start at 1 p.m.

This Easter will be the first time in five years that I have not gone to Puerto Vallarta for the holiday, but I will go in December for my birthday.

Talking of birthdays — Reflections Bar on Polk Street invites you to help celebrate David Ryan's 65th on Sunday, April 20 from 11 a.m. on, with wonderful refreshments and party favors from Thailand. Wait till you see the fotos!

Yes, Club Rendez-Vous still has

Karaoki on Wednesday nights starting at 9 p.m., and I can't wait till I get well to see the fabulous guys that run it. Hi David Kapp!

Empress Snatch (I love that!) will be at the Denver Coronation on the 18th & 19th of April. I had a great time there years ago with my Emperor Bob Cramer. It's a great city!

Remember Kimo's is open from 8 a.m. till 2 a.m. every day and that handsome Bryan is holding forth without me, so do drop in and have a drink with him.

Emperor Steve Rasher has been very good about doing things for me during my down time — Thanks honey!

For all you lovers of ice cream, a new business has opened next door to the popular Cinch Saloon. It's called "Peppermint Pink" and they have great banana splits. Give them a try. They open at 7 a.m.

Thank you Linda Miller, my favorite post mistress at the Pine St. Office. Keep those cards and letters coming!

Don't miss "Dining Out for Life 2003" on Wednesday, April 23, a great way to enjoy a good meal and have 25-percent of your

food bill go to a good cause, the Stop AIDS Project. Lots of restaurants are taking part, and you can find out which ones by going online at www.diningoutforlife.com.

Coming up on April 26 at The Pavilion at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, Tish Crabb will be presenting "Alice in Wonderland's King and Queen of Hearts Ball," a journey through the looking glass to benefit the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund. Tickets are \$10, and the fun lasts from 7-10 p.m. Call 415-641-5424 or email

tishcrabb@aol.com

Over at the Pendulum in the Castro (4146 18th St. at Collingwood) they hold "Amateur Strip Night" on Wednesday, April 23, with hunky men taking it all off, down to their skivvies. Catch the action! Call if you have any questions at 863-4441.

Also on Wednesday, at Most Holy Redeemer Parish (100 Diamond St.), Kaleo Cafe hosts a gay men's Hula dance! Wear shorts and t-shirt (not a Hawaiian shirt?). The classes are \$5 and run from 6:30-8 p.m. Call Kawika Alifichie at 415-282-4865 or email kawika@kaleoacafe.com ▼

Cocktail Hour

Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

niversary on Sunday from 1800 to 2300 at their big dance space 550 Barneveld Ave. — and it's free! Congratulations to Ingu Yun and his faithful volunteers for having the guts, stamina, fervor and initiative to "fight back" against an individual who dared to denigrate customers for "not drinking" in a now failed country western bar. Lots of surprises here tonight. Be there!

Bare Chest Calendar finale

The finale for the 2004 Bare Chest Calendar takes place on Thursday, April 24 when all 12 winners will compete to see who will grace the cover of the 2004 edition. The runner-up will be on the back cover.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and all the judges as well as all those who competed. As always, it was a pleasure to be involved with a very worthy charitable project.

Heading for the capital

Hundreds will trek to Washington, D.C. next weekend for the annual American Brotherhood Weekend, where the American Leather Man, American Leather Woman and American Leather Boy 2004 will be named in a weekend-long conclave. Expect to see many of the IML 2003 contenders there as well. Rich Trevino, Tobin Britton and Kip Davidson will step aside to make way for the new titleholders. They did a fantastic job with their titles, which was made relatively easy with a hefty travel fund. The Washington Plaza Hotel is the venue for this weekend, and it's always a spring fling in Washington at this time of the year. Hope to see you all there.

Meanwhile...

The International Leather Sir/boy contests are not until October in St. Petersburg, Florida, and the first regional contest will take place in Dallas, Texas the



Once again, in honor of his many marriages, Ray Tilton has been nominated for the Paper Wedding Dress Award. Will this year be his third triumph?

weekend of May 2-4. Mark Frazier, owner of the Dallas Eagle and sponsor of the Southwest Regional Contest has everything in place for the weekend. Other regions have set their schedules as well so

tune in here for that schedule at a later date.

Have a great Easter weekend and for up-to-the-minute leather news all over the country, regularly click on www.L LeatherPage.com. ▼

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PARTING GLANCES

Shattuck Cinema 3/22 9:35p.m.
Movie "View From the Top". To male college couple sitting in back. I was two seats away. Wanted to say hello after, but too shy. Would like to be friends to both of you. Pls call. ☎ 72497

3/21 - Briazz Van on Fell - 12 noon
Hot blond driver. Cruised me as you circled block 3 times. I was late for appointment, otherwise would have stopped. Leave message on how to contact you. ☎ 72498

3/19 Wed. Embarcadero Cntr 1pm
You'd just left Banana Republic. I was walking with co-worker. Shared a great smile. My other friends said you turned around right after I'd done the same. Let's Hook up. ☎ 72499

San Bruno Parking Lot 3/24
You were in your car. Let's meet this time. ☎ 72507

Erasure Concert 3-21-03
We were talking, dancing and we kissed. Would really like to see you again. Tried calling, but it was the wrong number. ☎ 72508

J Car 3/27
You long grey beard with Italian book. Me - Red beard. You sat next to me, smiled as I left at Market. Please call. ☎ 72509

Paul Taylor Sat. 3/29
Me: Older WM dressed in black, bald w/glasses with Asian friend. You: good-looking Asian in jeans/white top, with two friends in row in front of us. Let's Talk ☎ 72510

Gaylord's Noon Sat March 29
You in shorts, me in white hat. We exchanged greetings/energy. I want to know you. ☎ 72527

SEEKING RELATIONSHIP

Seriously Seeking Cute Long WM
I'm 35, Blk., 5'9", 139, 7 3/4" uncult. Desires to meet you. I will serve you like a king in all ways. Treat me well, and I will be the best thing in your life. ☎ 72511

Muscular Italian Amer seeks
Asian. Professionally employed, responsible, sincere. 44yrs. Seeks a smooth, toned/muscular Asian. I'm passionate and cultured. Please no games/bar scene. ☎ 72512

Seeking Tough Nip Workout
Buddy. 48 WGM, 220#, Brn., Bln., salt&pepper, tats, piercing. Serious nip pig with huge erect nips! ISO hardcore nip pig workout buddy for extensive nip workout sessions. Smokers A+. ☎ 72513

GJM 40 Near Lake Merritt
Seeking drinking, hanging out buddy. Like films, stage, food, baseball, drinking, etc. Not a sex ad. Age, size, race, looks unimportant. Urgently need male companionship. ☎ 72519

Want a Mentor?
Looking for young men 22-32 who feel they need a little guidance by this 58 yr, 6'1", 195, GWM, NS, LD preferred. I enjoy time at home, weekend drives, cooking/gardening, dogs etc. You like other things? Great! I'll learn from you too. ☎ 72520

Latin Guy 4 U Versatile
38yrs. GLM smooth masculine versatile athletic body great butt brown skin looking 4 a long-term relationship with GWM or GLM under 38yrs. masc. HIV+ healthy @ 5'8" to 5'11" weight proportioned to ht. Nice guy versatile. No drugs or smoking only. SF. ☎ 72531

I'm 48 5'9" 150# Work Out 3 Days
A week swimmer build, big arms, nice pecs, flat stomach, nice dick, smooth tight butt, into arts, zen, yoga, & life. I.N.S. other inshape guys to date. Age, race unimportant. nice body cool attitude a must. HIV-. ☎ 72528

Monogamous Muscular Man
Seeks GWM, HIV-neg., 45-60 for dating and mutual titplay in S.F. Face unimportant, physique is. I'm Asian, 5'7", 150#, mustache, smooth 40" chest, 30" waist. N/S. ☎ 72529

Cute Young Russian
Is looking for another cute intelligent Russian or European under 40 to share all the pleasures life has to offer. ☎ 72530

SEEKING ADVENTURE

Sub seeking Dom Black Top
Boiysh sub, 41 yrs., white 5'6", 150lbs seeking DOM Black top for an ongoing playmate. Seeking training and guidance through restraints, toys, verbal, etc. ☎ 72500

Horny GWM Seeks Same
I kick back for long, slow suck worship. If you are hung (real inches or more) reciprocation or 69 possible. Me-41, 5'11", 185 lbs, hairy, muscular, brn/hzl, HIV-Poz, 7 real inches. You hairy A+, h/w not proportional. ☎ 72501

Oral Expert for Hung Males
BM, muscular, masculine, hung, good looking. Seeking to service hung males 21-50. Italians/Latinos a plus. Bl OK. Satisfaction guaranteed. All replies will be answered. S 72502

Hot Passionate East Bay Bottom
39 year old WM 5'9", 150lbs, Blond, swimmer's build, 8". Open to most scenes. Looking for Top Men for hot sex. Possible relationship can travel to SF. ☎ 72503

Seeking Senior to Fuck My Face
Masculine WM seeks over 65 WM to grab back of my head and fast fuck my face, stopping short and finishing by shooting your load on my face. ☎ 72505

Desires Thicked Cock Average
/masculine guy. Heavy intense j/o, dirty talk, phallic worship, partying buddy desired. Some oral ok. Your place, pm only. Not into toys, videos, groups, anal. Long partying scenes only. ☎ 72506

Are you 40-60? Like Head?
Cockucker seeks dominate top to blow. Height & weight not as important as attitude. You are in charge. Sir. Boy is 40, tall, HIV+, attractive. Likes tit work, sucking and being told what to do. ☎ 72514

Full Deepthroat Oral Service
By SF GWM, 6'1", 185#, fit, GL, friendly, masculine, HIV-, D/D free. Complete oral service delivered to your place with no reciprocation necessary. ☎ 72515

Neighborhood Oral- J/O Buddy
GWM 54, 6', 165#, HIV Neg., discreet, moustache, s/p hair, smoker seeks buddy for oral, J/O, Kissing, touching, pleasure. Geary to Washington/Jones to Franklin Area. Must have a place. ☎ 72516

Slave Wanted
Need a submissive slender guy with a tight butt under 40 to follow orders and worship suckable mushroom headed sausage. Trim 44 white guy. Can be nice or mean. ☎ 72517

EBay GWM Bear Cpl ISO Bears
to come visit us in Antioch for some hot/tubing fun. Hairy, masculine singles or couples. We are bearded, hairy, HIV-, 40's, prefer minimum versatile guys over 35, over 180#. ☎ 72518

~Hispanic Love Man~
(Oh where can you be?) I'm looking for the right Hispanic guy, for a relationship, etc. If hung A+. ☎ 72538

ISO Suck Buddy, WM, Latin, Asn.
Masculine, discreet, WM, 5'-10", 170#, 7" u/c needs regular care. I am HIV- disease free. UB also, can travel. ☎ 72521

Mature Male CMT
Is looking for other male CMT over 40 for giving and receiving Swedish massage on a regular basis. ☎ 72542

Mature Smokers
WLM 46, 6', 165lbs, moderate hairy. ISO older M who is a regular cigar/cigarette smoker who enjoys deep kissing, affection & oral pleasures. No gay scene or Lifestyle. Body type not important. ☎ 72522

Suckable Sausage
Get on your Knees and kiss and lick it. Masculine lean muscled guy seeks guys under 45 with tight butts who get turned on being submissive. ☎ 72523

Boiysh Asian
Seeking smooth gym toned WM for mutual massage, oral service and J/O. Let's play! ☎ 72524

Sensual Redheads
WLM 46, 6', 165lbs, dark hair, moustache, moderate hairy. I'm seeking men with reddish hair over 40 who enjoy sensual oral pleasures. Not into gay scene or drugs. Smoking light drinking OK. ☎ 72525

Smooth Boiysh Asian
Seeking smooth gym toned White male for mutual massage, jerk-off and oral service. Be my new play buddy! ☎ 72532

~Erotic Encounter~
Complimentary sensual massaged given to in-shape guys in 20s or 30s who need relief. Friendly WPM in East Bay wide provide you with relaxing tantric session. ☎ 72533

9 P.M. And I've Got To Have It:
A cock, a fist, balls in my mouth my dildo's not enough. I'm horny. Can't someone give this White, male bottom what he's begging for? ☎ 72534

•Opposites Attract•
Big-dick Italian top gets hard for bottom boys with small dicks and bubble butts. Any race. ☎ 72535

Black Top seeks Bottom to Plow
Masculine Blk top, 6'1", 225# seeks total submissive to fuck. Be clean shaven, smooth all over, HIV-. ☎ 72504

Oral Expert For Hung Guys
I'm hung and I'm seeking to service guys who are hung "9" or "10" inches or more. We can party and watch videos. ☎ 72536

Young European Bottom!!
In search for a dominant top or tops to submit to any training or group scenes 5'10", 160lbs, full lips, cute baby face, tight hole. Be under 40. ☎ 72537

Use Your Mouth!
Masculine swimmer with nice cock and smooth 31 waist butt needs oral service on both sides. Healthy HIV- guy 44 seeks healthy trim waisted guys 20 to 47 to make me feel good. ☎ 72539

Hung Guys Needed If You're
Hung 9 or 10 inches or more and your White, Hispanic or Italian, call me so we can get together. ☎ 72540

Do Your Weenie A Big Favor...
And stick it in my mouth. Clean healthy senior GWM with no teeth seeks big w. masc. guy. ☎ 72541

R.U. Lanky And U.C.
This mid 50s GWM would like to work you over. Be clean, any race, 20-40, and willing to have a good time. ☎ 72543

Hung Hispanic Guys Wanted!
If you're Hispanic and hung "8", "9" or "10" inches or more, call me to get serviced, party, watch videos etc. ☎ 72544

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Seeking masculine/average guy for heavy, intense j/o, dirty talk, cock worship. Drinking/ partying buddy desired. Some oral OK. Your place, PM only. Long partying scenes only. ☎ 72545

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To a dog training and/or submissive slave training by a cute but demanding master total obedience and cooperation guaranteed. Be under 40. The boy is 5'10", 160lbs, full lips, baby face. Very cute and eager. ☎ 72546

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Headline, 30 characters maximum

Write the rest of your ad here, 30 words maximum


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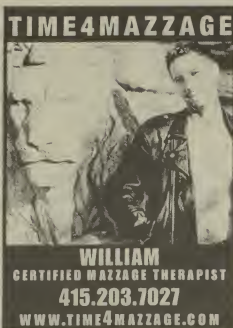
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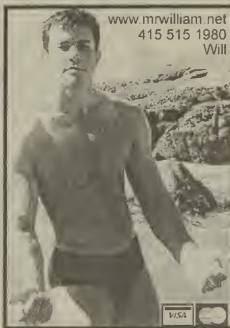
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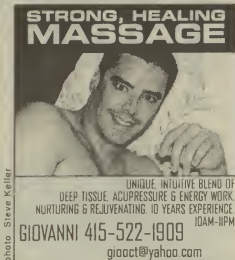


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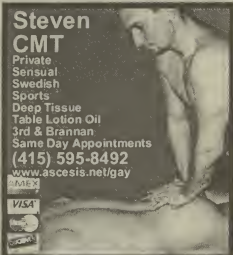
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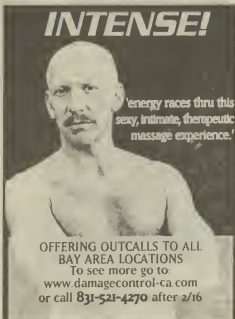


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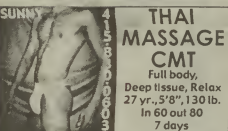
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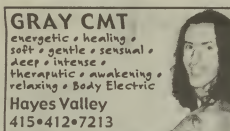


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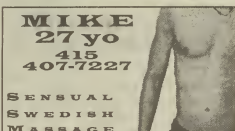
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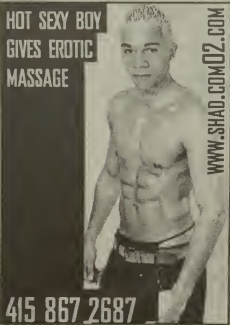
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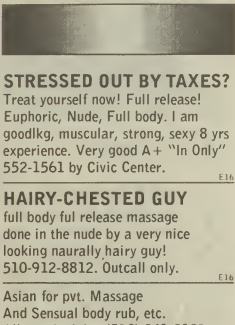
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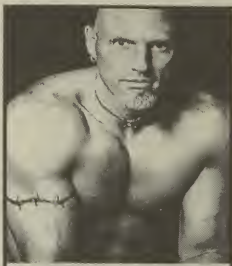
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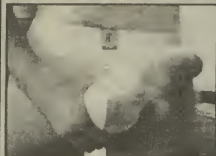
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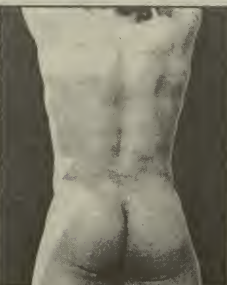
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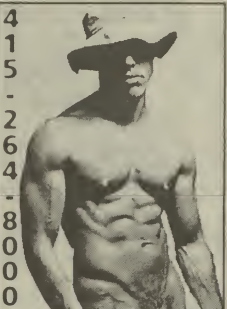
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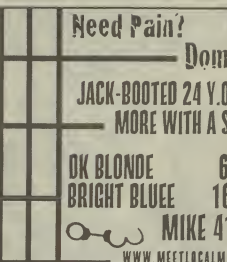


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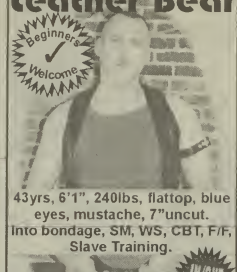
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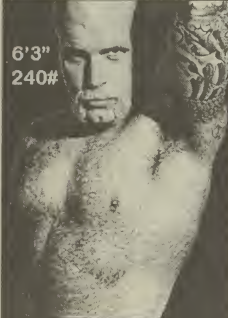
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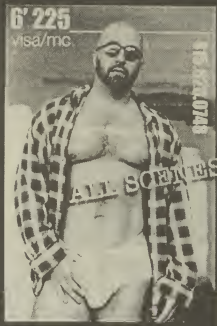
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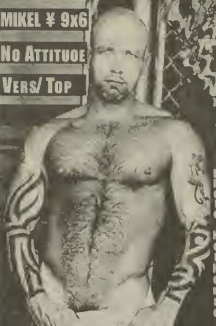
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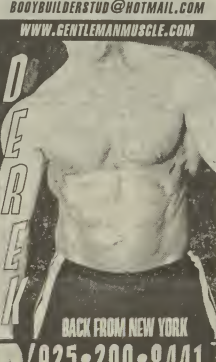
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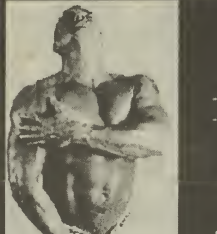
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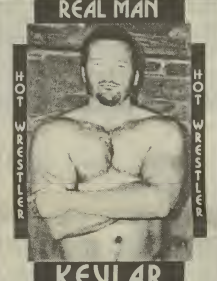


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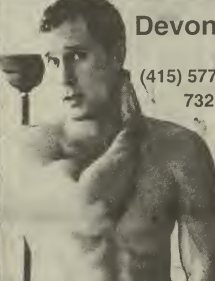
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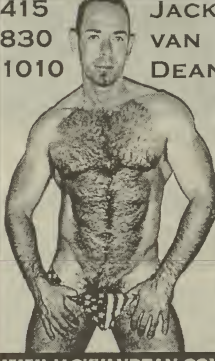
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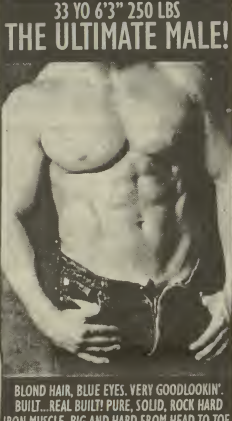
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GOT PECS?

The last Bare Chest Calendar Contest (for Mr. December 2004) is on THURSDAY, APRIL 17TH @ THE POWERHOUSE. This is your last chance to get on the calendar this year! At 9:30 PM. Be there! You don't want some skinny little wuss to win do you? Then we have to look at him for the whole month of Dec.!

XXX WEB

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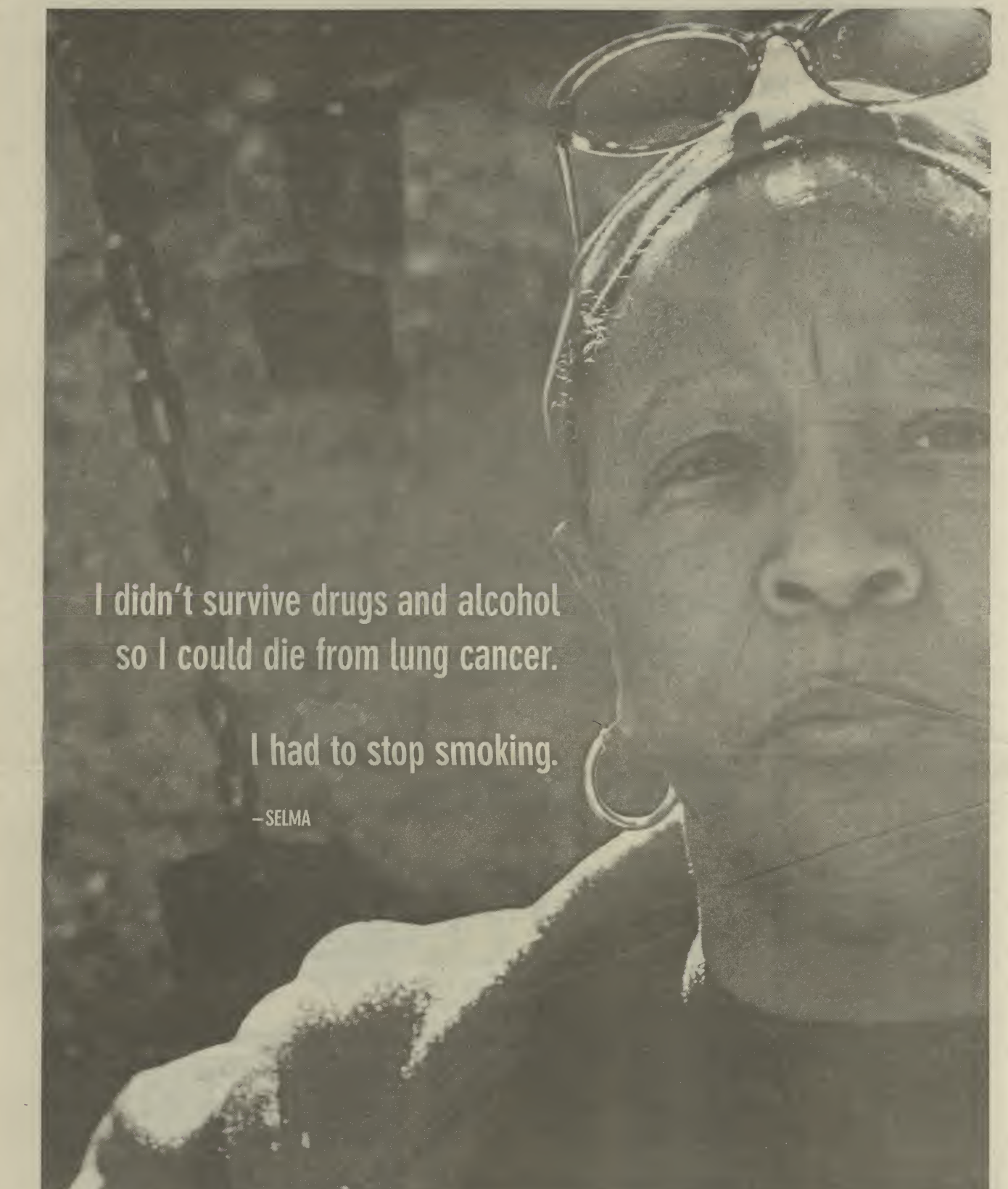
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I didn't survive drugs and alcohol
so I could die from lung cancer.

I had to stop smoking.

—SELMA

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